

University of Tasmania Library Survey – September 2004

The University Library conducted a Client Satisfaction Survey in September 2004. This was a repeat of a survey conducted in 2001, and so this provides an opportunity to evaluate our present level of service, and also make comparisons with past practice.

The same survey is used by most of the other university libraries in Australia, so comparison with them can also be made.

What is important for Library clients?

The top three items in importance were

- The Library collection
- Library catalogue provides clear and useful information
- Information resources (books, electronic, etc) are easily accessed.

How is the Library performing?

The top three items for Library performance were

- Library staff treat me fairly and without discrimination
- Library staff are friendly
- Library staff display professionalism

Areas of lowest performance are

- Number of computer workstations
- Computer facilities and electronic equipment
- Library staff keep me informed about new services and collections

Where are the most important areas the Library can potentially improve?

These areas are those where there is the greatest difference between the importance and performance score for each variable

- Number of computer workstations
- Computer facilities and electronic equipments
- The Library collection

The first two of these are being addressed by the Learning Hubs, which will be available for first semester 2004. An additional 60 computers will be available, as well as wireless networks, and a facility for students to bring their own computers in and connect to the network. A videoconferencing facility will be provided. There will be improved study spaces for both individuals and groups.

The Library collection will be developed through additional funding being provided over the next three years. Part of these funds will be used for the provision of texts for undergraduate study, and resources for new courses and units. This should assist in meeting the needs of undergraduate students, who were by far the largest group that responded to the survey. A survey is planned for 2005 to identify areas of the collection where student needs are not being met.

Comparison with 2001

In 2001 the areas identified as most important for the Library to improve were

- Number of computer workstations
- Photocopying facilities
- Computer facilities/electronic equipment

The photocopying facilities were improved in July 2004. Copiers throughout the Library were replaced with new digital copiers providing improved quality and faster reproduction. At the same time a new card system was introduced, providing a one card solution for student identification, printing, photocopying and library borrowing.

While there has been incremental improvement in computer facilities since 2001, the implementation of the Learning Hubs will provide a significant improvement. Even so, it can be expected that students will still not be satisfied with the level of access, and there can never be enough computers to satisfy demand.

Comparison with other universities

The University of Tasmania Library recorded an overall score which puts it on the cusp of the first and second quartiles in comparison with other university libraries. All categories are performing in the top 50%, except for facilities and equipment, which is on the median. UTAS Library performed highest in the category of Library staff. The lowest score was for facilities and equipment, but this showed the greatest improvement since 2001.

Overall, satisfaction with the library scored 5.38 out of a possible 7. This puts UTAS Library in the top 50%, compared with other libraries. This shows a 0.15 improvement since 2001, when performance was in the third quartile.

Future directions

The Library recognises that it needs to continue to improve its services to maintain client satisfaction. During 2005, the Learning Hubs will be implemented, the Library collection will be enhanced, and improved access will be provided to the Library catalogue and electronic journals. A Library Bulletin will be put on the Library web site and distributed with UniTAS to improve communication. There are no specific initiatives that need to be developed to address the outcomes of the survey, over and above those already in train. This is not to sound complacent, but rather that we have already identified a number of actions within the Library planning process to improve library services to maintain and improve client satisfaction.

If you would like further information on any aspect of this survey, please contact me.

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