UTAS Library conducted a major survey of its clients in late September 2010 to find out which aspects of Library services are of most importance to our clients and how we are performing in these areas.

The last client survey was completed in 2008 and surveys were also completed in 2001, 2004 and 2006. The Library can therefore compare its performance across time and against a large number of other Australian university libraries who use the same survey.

Who are our clients?
3492 clients completed the survey, an increase on the 2422 responses in 2008. Clients identified themselves as users from all library locations and included clients in Sydney.  
- 66.3% of responses were from undergraduates  
- 21.8% were from postgraduates  
- 6.7% were from academic/research staff  
- 3.6% were from general staff  
- 14.3% identified as international students

What is important for Library clients?
The five most important survey statements for clients overall were:  
1. Online resources (e.g. ejournals, databases, ebooks) meet my learning and research needs  
2. Library staff provide accurate answers to my questions  
3. Library staff are approachable and helpful  
4. Library staff are readily available to assist me  
5. When I am away from campus I can access the Library resources and services I need

Library staff and online resources were rated in the top five in importance in the 2008 survey.

How is the Library performing?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Highest performance</th>
<th>Lowest performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Library staff treat me fairly and without discrimination</td>
<td>1. A computer is available when I need one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Library staff are approachable and helpful</td>
<td>2. The Library keeps me informed about its services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Library staff provide accurate answers to my questions</td>
<td>3. The Library anticipates my learning and research needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Library staff are readily available to assist me</td>
<td>4. Laptop facilities (e.g. desks, power) in the Library meet my needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Face-to-face enquiry services meet my needs</td>
<td>5. I can find a place in the Library to work in a group when I need to</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The performance of Library staff has rated very highly in every client survey.

Four of the lowest performing areas (numbers 1, 2, 4 and 5) were also rated in the 5 poorest performers in 2008.
As in 2008, low scores relating to availability of computers, adequacy of group and quiet study spaces, laptop facilities and wireless access resulted in Facilities and Equipment being the lowest performing category. Clients also made comments about Library services in their survey responses and 10.2% of comments were about availability of computers. 97% of those comments were negative.

**What are the most important areas for improvement?**

Survey statements where clients report a significant difference between importance and performance indicate areas where client needs are not being met and the Library needs to take action to address the problems.

The survey company, Insync, recommends gap scores of or above 2.0 ‘are serious and should be acted upon’. Gaps between 1.0 and 1.99 are ‘considered meaningful and should be investigated further’.

Computer availability had the greatest gap between importance and performance at 2.24. This gap is greater than in previous surveys which were 2.10 (in 2008) and 1.73 (in 2006). This score in 2010 put UTAS Library in the lowest quartile of the 38 Australian university libraries that have completed the same survey.

Gap scores by student type show that computer availability is the greatest issue for both undergraduates and postgraduates:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Type</th>
<th>Gap Score</th>
<th>(greatest gap)</th>
<th>(previous year)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduates</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>(greatest gap)</td>
<td>(2.33 in 2008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduates</td>
<td>1.57</td>
<td>(greatest gap)</td>
<td>(1.44 in 2008)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The top five areas for improvement identified by clients overall were:

1. A computer is available when I need one
2. The items I’m looking for on the Library shelves are usually there
3. Online resources (e.g. journals, databases, ebooks) meet my learning and research needs
4. The Library catalogue is easy to use
5. I can find a quiet place in the Library to study when I need to

The ease of finding course-specific resources is no longer in the top gap areas, perhaps reflecting the success and range of the Library’s subject guides. Computer availability, adequacy of the collection and study space were in the top five in 2008.

Gap scores in specific Library locations show that clients in most libraries believe computer availability is a significant problem:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Gap Score</th>
<th>(greatest gap)</th>
<th>(previous year)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AMC</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>(second greatest gap)</td>
<td>(1.43 in 2008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>(greatest gap)</td>
<td>(1.95 in 2008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>(greatest gap)</td>
<td>(2.41 in 2008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Launceston</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>(greatest gap)</td>
<td>(2.08 in 2008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law</td>
<td>2.19</td>
<td>(second greatest gap)</td>
<td>(2.17 in 2008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morris Miller</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>(greatest gap)</td>
<td>(2.37 in 2008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>(greatest gap)</td>
<td>(1.60 in 2008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>(greatest gap)</td>
<td>(1.88 in 2008)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It should be noted that the Science Library refurbishment in January 2010 included additional computers.
Other statements with serious gap scores in specific libraries were:

- **Clinical Library**: finding a quiet place to study (2.50) and finding a place to work in a group (2.26). This year approximately 250 medical students from first and second year moved from the Sandy Bay campus to the Clinical School. Since the last survey the Clinical Library has also been serving the full cohort of 200 nursing students. The size of the Clinical Library has not changed in that time.

- **Cradle Coast**: items being on the shelves (2.24) and information resources meeting needs (2.02). Collection adequacy was a serious gap for Cradle Coast in 2008 (2.72) and 2006 (2.76). The Library’s effort to increase the collection size at Cradle Coast has had some impact on the gap score over the last four years.

- **Law**: adequacy of wireless access (2.21) was the greatest gap.

- **Music**: opening hours (2.27) an information resources meeting needs (2.06). Adequacy of the collection was a serious and greater gap for Music in 2008 (2.44) and also in 2006 (3.06).

**What can be done to improve in these areas?**

The Library will be further analysing the results and developing actions to address the areas identified for improvement, including:

1. **A computer is available when I need one**

   Computers in the Library are centrally funded through the Infrastructure Planning and Management Committee (IPMC) and managed by Information Technology Resources (ITR). The Library has reported the survey findings to ITR. ITR are monitoring the usage of centrally managed computers across UTAS with a view to relocating under-utilised computers to areas of greater need. The Library will continue to lobby for greater numbers of computers to be located in the Library. The Library will increase student awareness that computers located in training labs in the Library are available for student use when not being used for training.

   The Library plan for 2011 includes preparing a business case to secure funding for a pool of laptops to be located in the Library and lent on demand; and investigating options for visually displaying computer availability in the Library so it is easier to find a vacant computer.

2. **The items I’m looking for on the Library shelves are usually there**

   A number of circumstances could result in the item not being on the shelf – it may be on loan, recently returned or awaiting reshelving for example – and Library staff can assist clients to track down items that are not on the shelf. It is important to note both the location of the item (Ltn, Morris Miller etc) as well as the call number. The Library will be reviewing the information we provide for clients about this.

   Survey comments on this topic include the need to improve the layout of the shelves and signage on our collections, to improve the arrangement of CDs in the Music Library and follow up on missing and lost books.

   The Library is making plans to rearrange the Morris Miller Library collection on levels 3 and 4 in a more logical way, making level 3 serials/journals and level 4 all books. This would be a very large logistical exercise and would happen at the end of 2011.

   The Library plan for 2011 includes classifying and enhancing the cataloguing of CDs in the Music Library to co-locate similar material and make it easier for students to use and browse the collection.
3. **Online resources (e.g. journals, databases, ebooks) meet my learning and research needs**

The Library current spends approximately two-thirds of its acquisitions budget on online resources. Usage of online resources can now be assessed and under-utilised resources are candidates for cancellation to make way for other resources that better meet client needs.

The Library now has an annual process for the review of online resources, in consultation with academics, schools and Faculties, to ensure the resources we are subscribing to are the most relevant for current teaching, learning and research.

The Library successfully bid for an additional $250,000 in 2010 to subscribe to approximately 90 journals rated A and A* in the ERA research rankings. Most of these subscriptions will begin in 2011.

The Library currently has access to over 43,000 ebooks and the Library’s collection development policy ([http://www.utas.edu.au/library/about/documents/UTAS-Collection-Development-Policy-V6.1.pdf](http://www.utas.edu.au/library/about/documents/UTAS-Collection-Development-Policy-V6.1.pdf)) now states that ebooks are the preferred format for the purchase of prescribed texts and essential/required readings. Not all scholarly textbooks are yet available as ebooks but an increasing number are being published in this format.

The Library plan for 2011 includes pursuing a UTAS-wide approach to managing exposure to currency fluctuations to ensure the online resources budget is not adversely affected.

4. **The Library catalogue is easy to use**

Early in 2011 the Library will be launching a new search interface that will be much easier to use and will simultaneously search the catalogue, ejournals, databases and institutional repositories from a single search box. The new interface will allow clients to easily narrow search results and link to full-text if it is available.

5. I can find a quiet place in the Library to study when I need to

The Library plan for 2011 includes devising refurbishment plans for the Clinical, Music and Launceston Campus libraries and making a case for continuing the refurbishment of Morris Miller Library on levels 3 and 4. Study spaces will be considered in these plans.

In 2011, the Morris Miller Library level 2 and level 3 Learning Hub will be open 24/7.

Library staff will be asked to roam designated quiet study areas regularly to provide assistance and monitor noise levels.

**How do the Library’s results compare with previous surveys and other libraries?**

The Library recorded an overall performance score of 76.2% - comparable to the 76.3% score from 2008. The overall satisfaction rating was 5.37 out of 7, slightly down on the 5.43 achieved in 2008. This puts UTAS Library in the fourth quartile (bottom 25%) of the 38 other libraries that have completed the survey in the last two years.

In the Library Staff category, UTAS Library is performing in the first quartile (top 25%) of the comparison group. Performance scores for Communication, Service Delivery and Information Resources categories have decreased slightly since 2008.

Di Worth
(Acting) University Librarian
November 2010