The Library has conducted an annual survey of user satisfaction with its resources, services and facilities for a number of years. The survey instrument, devised by SCONUL, was made available this year as an online questionnaire during the final week of the Epiphany Term. The survey was publicised to the whole academic community by email; some 10% (1490 responses) of the University population responded. 74% of the replies were from undergraduates, 9% from staff and 8% each from taught postgraduates and research postgraduates.

The survey seeks opinion on the importance of, and satisfaction with, 16 aspects of Library provision. Results from the 5 scale points are weighted to produce a standard scale of scores derived from positive and negative responses, facilitating the comparison of data presented as histograms. The figures in the following graphs are weighted averages, not percentages.

Results are very similar to those of the previous year. Respondents are most satisfied with the catalogue, staff assistance and the Library overall. The satisfaction score is lowest for reading list materials and short loan, with the Library environment the cause of most dissatisfaction. Satisfaction now exceeds importance for photocopying facilities, as well as user documents. Satisfaction and importance scores are converging for PC provision. For most other facets, there continue to be significant gaps between user perceptions of the importance of Library services and facilities, and their satisfaction with those aspects of provision, most notably for the range of books and for ease of finding stock.

The most interesting trends are
  • a continuing increase in importance of electronic information resources
  • increasing importance of, and satisfaction with, the catalogue
  • a continuing decline in importance of PC provision
  • a continuing decline in importance of photocopying facilities

In addition to the quantitative data, almost half of respondents supplied comments, in many cases at some length, providing a mine of information on user expectations to inform planning and decision-making for service development, particularly of the study environment. Liaison librarians will discuss comments relating to information resource provision in specific subjects with the appropriate Department.