

Law Library Refurbishment Survey

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Overview

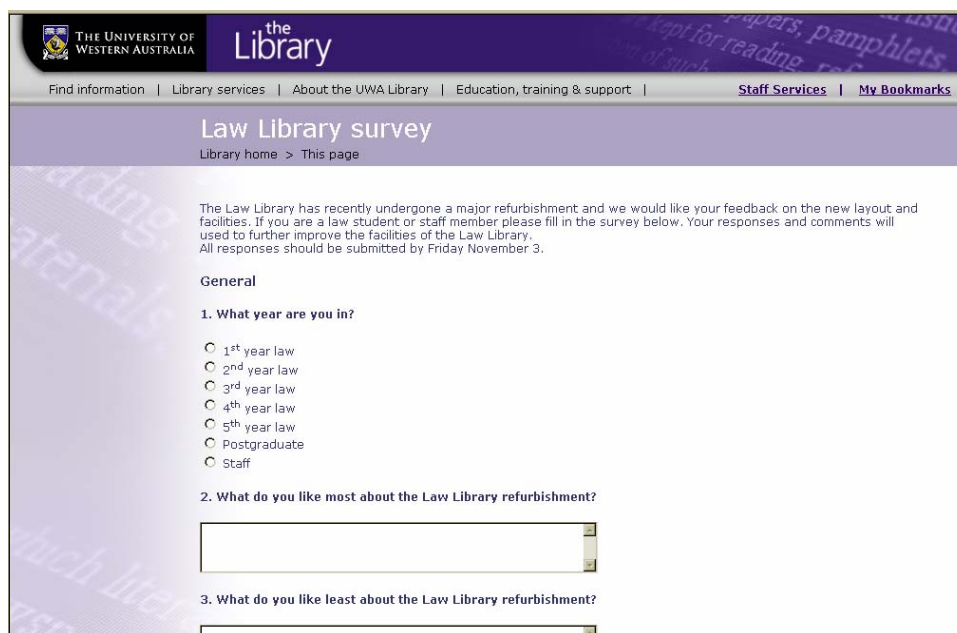
With joint funding from the University's student initiatives' fund, the UWA Library, a Law Society of WA Public Purposes Trust Grant and the Law School a major refurbishment of the Law Library was undertaken at the beginning of 2006.

Key requirements that have been addressed in the Law refurbishment are:

- Provision of comfortable, bright areas conducive to study
- Increased access to computers
- Enhanced lap-top facilities
- Wireless access available throughout the Library
- After hours access to computers (24 hour computer room)
- Better access to significant print resources arranged in an intuitive way for browsing and retrieval
- Dedicated student collaborative working areas
- State of the art computer training facilities
- Better access to high-use collections

| The new look Law library at a glance ... | | |
|--|--|----------------------------|
| | Pre Refurbishment | Post Refurbishment |
| Computers | 32 | 71 |
| Discussion Rooms | 1 | 5 |
| Postgraduate Room | 1 | 0 |
| Printers | 2 | 3 |
| Study Spaces | 325 | 394 |
| Training facilities | 1 Room (17 capacity) | 2 Rooms (28 / 18 capacity) |
| Wireless coverage | 1 st and 2 nd Floors | Throughout |
| 24 hour access room | No | Yes |

The survey



The screenshot shows the 'Law Library survey' page. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links: 'Find information', 'Library services', 'About the UWA Library', 'Education, training & support', 'Staff Services', and 'My Bookmarks'. The main heading is 'Law Library survey' with a breadcrumb trail 'Library home > This page'. Below the heading, a paragraph states: 'The Law Library has recently undergone a major refurbishment and we would like your feedback on the new layout and facilities. If you are a law student or staff member please fill in the survey below. Your responses and comments will be used to further improve the facilities of the Law Library. All responses should be submitted by Friday November 3.' The survey is titled 'General' and contains three questions: 1. 'What year are you in?' with radio button options for '1st year law', '2nd year law', '3rd year law', '4th year law', '5th year law', 'Postgraduate', and 'Staff'. 2. 'What do you like most about the Law Library refurbishment?' with a text input field. 3. 'What do you like least about the Law Library refurbishment?' with a text input field.

On the 20 October 2006 an online survey asking for feedback on the recent Law Library refurbishments was emailed to all law students and academic staff.

The survey covered a range of topics including general feelings about the refurbishment; access to computers and laptop facilities; study facilities; and collection access. There were 15 questions:

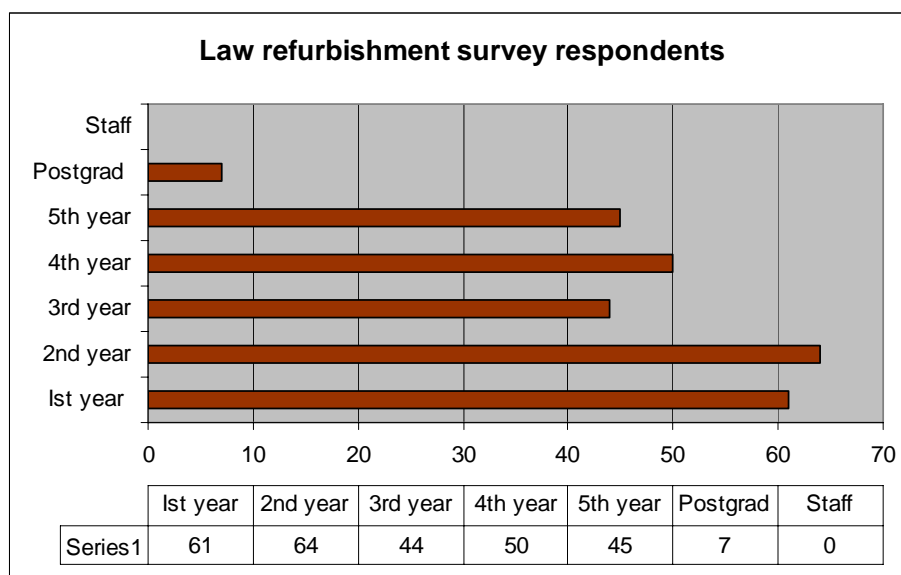
1. What year are you in?
2. What do you like most about the Law Library refurbishment?
3. What do you like least about the Law Library refurbishment?
4. How easy is it for you to access a computer in the Law Library?
5. How easy is it for you to find a spare power point when you need to plug in your laptop in the Law Library?
6. How reliable is SNAP wireless in the Law Library?
7. What is the best location to successfully log into SNAP wireless in the Law Library?
8. How easy is it for you to access a discussion room in the Law Library when you need to do group study?
9. How easy is it for you to find a quiet/silent study area in the Law Library?
10. How do you rate the noise level in the Law Library?
11. How often do you use the 24 hour access room after the Law Library has closed?
12. How frequently do you access print resources in the Law Library?
13. How easy is it to access the collections in the compactus on level 4?
14. When you need to use print journals or reports in the Law Library how frequently do you find them on the shelf?
15. Any other comments

The report below outlines the results and gives a general overview of the issues raised

Survey Results

Question 1 – What year are you in?

A total of 271 respondents replied to the survey with responses fairly evenly spread across all study years. Although academic staff were invited to participate in the survey, none took up the offer and this may have been because the survey questions were specifically directed at students.



Question 2 - What do you like most about the Law Library refurbishment?

There was an overwhelmingly positive response to this question with many students commenting on the increased numbers of computers and laptop areas, the general design and layout, the openness, light and ambience, and the better facilities.

| General themes | No. of positive comments |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Computers - more and better | 133 |
| Ambience / space | 44 |
| Laptop area / power points | 40 |
| Group study / discussion rooms | 29 |
| Improved Layout | 28 |
| Furnishings – computer tables | 12 |
| Training / Computer rooms | 12 |
| Modern new look / Appearance | 12 |
| Furnishings - armchairs | 10 |
| Furnishings – computer chairs | 10 |
| 24 hour access room | 7 |

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Navigation, Ease of access | 6 |
| Compactus | 7 |
| Express terminals | 3 |
| Study space | 2 |
| SNAP access | 2 |
| Air conditioning | 1 |
| Carpet | 1 |

A selection of comments include:

"The appearance of the ground floor is very flash"

"There is more space and there is more light and its made the upstairs areas a bit quieter by freeing it up of people"

"24 hour lab, social and networking op on ground floor, choice of different styles of studying (i.e. - social, group, or silent on 4th floor) Excellent access to computers and printers"

"It makes the library look a little more trendy and "technological" as opposed to what people usually think law libraries look: old underground crypts filled with shelves of dusty tomes, and old scary grey-haired hunchbacked librarians..."

"It's made studying a lot more comfortable which in turn allows you to spend longer hours studying without feeling as uncomfortable or fatigued."

"There is a good separation between the interactive areas of the library and the places where one can work in peace."

"Looks great, better for study, makes our library really stand out as opposed to others, which we should probably be striving for"

"I find it's much quicker to use the PCs, especially with the introduction of the express terminals. Plus the computers themselves seem to work much better."

"The increased number of desks and computers, as well as the open plan. It makes the ground floor a much brighter, friendly place with natural light."

"All the computers! Plus its nice to have a relaxed, open area downstairs with more quiet, serious areas elsewhere."

"Its more modern and technologically up to date"

"That there is lots of desk space on the bottom floor for laptops etc... and the orange comfy chairs!"

"The lay out of the computers on the ground floor. Fantastic!"

"Increased computer terminals and the relocation of texts so that the ones you want to read are in a quieter section of the library, e.g. law reports"

"Number of computers on the bottom floor, it keeps the people that want to chat on the bottom floor and leaves the rest of the library fairly quiet."

"A change is as good as a holiday. And students are more comfortable studying in light, clean surroundings."

"The chairs are damn comfy"

Question 3 - What do you like least about the Law Library refurbishment?

Students took the opportunity to comment on a large range of areas they weren't happy with although the highest numbers of responses were in fact positive ones e.g. *"Nothing – it's all good!"* Key issues included noise particularly on the ground floor, the need for the discussion rooms to be sound-proofed, the compactus and the requirement for more power points on the upper floors.

Some responses indicated a resistance to change in preferring the old layout and interestingly there is a perception amongst some that there is now less study space.

| General themes | No. of negative comments |
|---|---------------------------------|
| Nothing – it's all good! | 32 |
| Group study / discussion rooms – Non-soundproofed | 28 |
| Noise | 23 |
| Compactus | 13 |
| Lack of power points – upper floors | 11 |
| Layout of ground floor | 15 |
| Group study / discussion rooms - Bookings | 10 |
| Print resources – access to / signage | 14 |
| Not enough quiet study spaces | 7 |
| Collections removed from ground floor | 6 |
| Refurbishment disruption | 6 |
| No toilets | 5 |
| Ground floor – Not enough seats / desks / computers | 9 |
| access to photocopiers | 5 |
| Group study / discussion rooms – Not enough | 3 |
| Old carpet on upper floors | 3 |
| Air conditioning / Lack of ventilation | 3 |
| No water coolers | 2 |
| Ground floor – Too many seats / desks / computers | 3 |
| Scanner – Lack of | 1 |
| Postgraduate room – Lack of | 1 |

A selection of comments include:

"It's a tie ... Compactuses were a really, really bad idea and having discussion rooms that echo and boom (ie. not even close to soundproofing) was a bad move"

"The amount of noise generated by the students attracted to such a friendly and welcoming area."

"noise travels more than before - i.e. there are less books etc to insulate from the noise (people talking)"

"There should be at least one toilet in the library! Rather troublesome to exit the library just to use the toilet. Should have a water cooler in the library too"

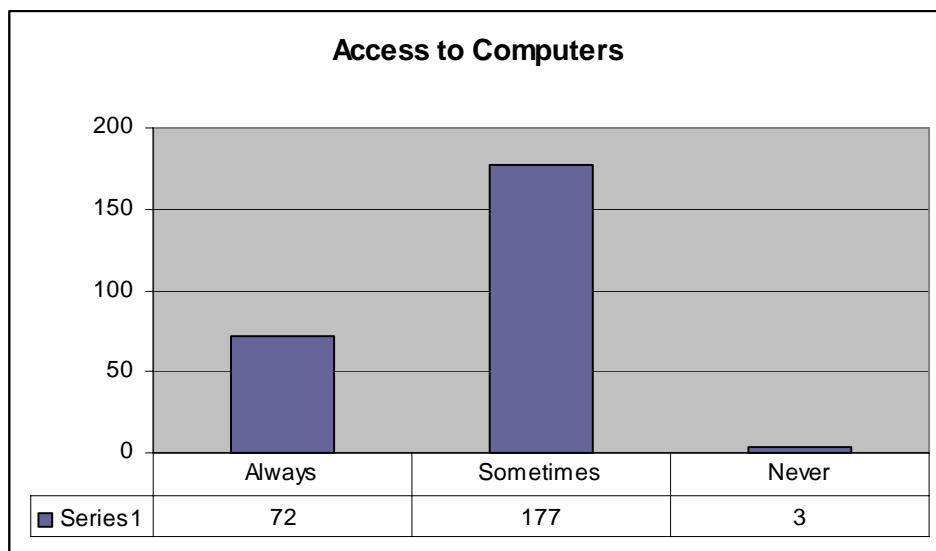
"There is still not enough room for everyone to study during busy periods. More power points are desperately needed on the 2nd, 3rd and 4th floors."

"There no longer seems to be a lot of quiet space in the library - the first floor is largely taken up with the computers (which is great in its own way), and the second floor is generally too noisy (because it's open to the first). This seems to have resulted in there being a lot more materials on the third and fourth floors, which results in their being more people looking for things up there."

Question 4 - How easy is it for you to access a computer in the Law Library?

"IT'S THE BEST LIBRARY ON CAMPUS- COMPUTER WISE! I never have to wait for one!"

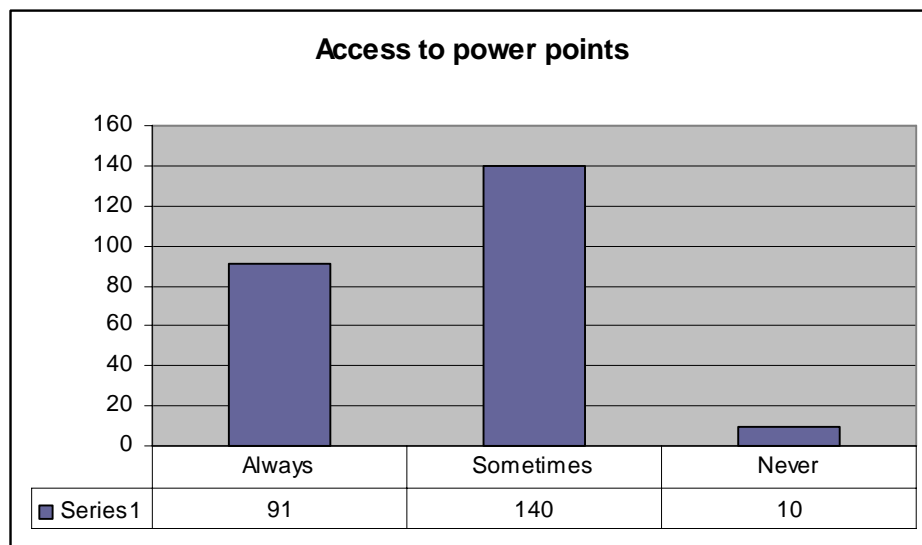
Survey results and associated comments indicate that students are generally happy with the number of computers in the Law Library. There were some comments indicating difficulty accessing a computer during peak periods which may account for "sometimes" being rated the highest. A number of students commented positively on the Express terminals.



Question 5 - How easy is it for you to find a spare power point when you need to plug in your laptop in the Law Library?

"This is probably the worst aspect of the law library. Almost every student has a laptop & needs a power supply when studying. There are plenty of power points near the computers, but hardly any in private study areas. This is made worst by the fact some people feel the need to hog power points even when their computer battery is full & doesn't really need it - only because there is the real threat they may never be able to find a spare one again!"

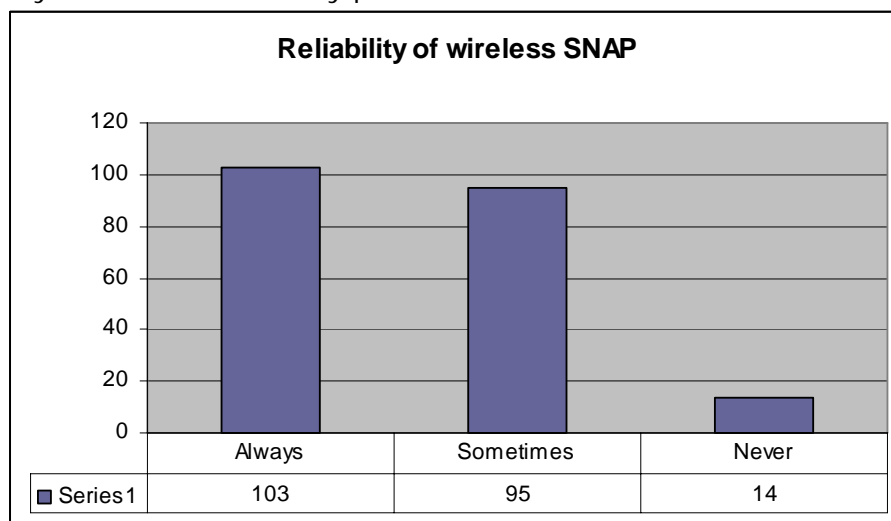
Survey results and associated comments indicate that access to power points for laptop use is still an issue particularly on the upper levels of the Law Library.



Question 6 - How reliable is SNAP wireless in the Law Library?

"The SNAP has been very disappointing this semester, runs slow and drops out consistently. The strength of the signal also varies quite a bit depending on where you are. I have gone back to using the wired LAN the past couple of weeks."

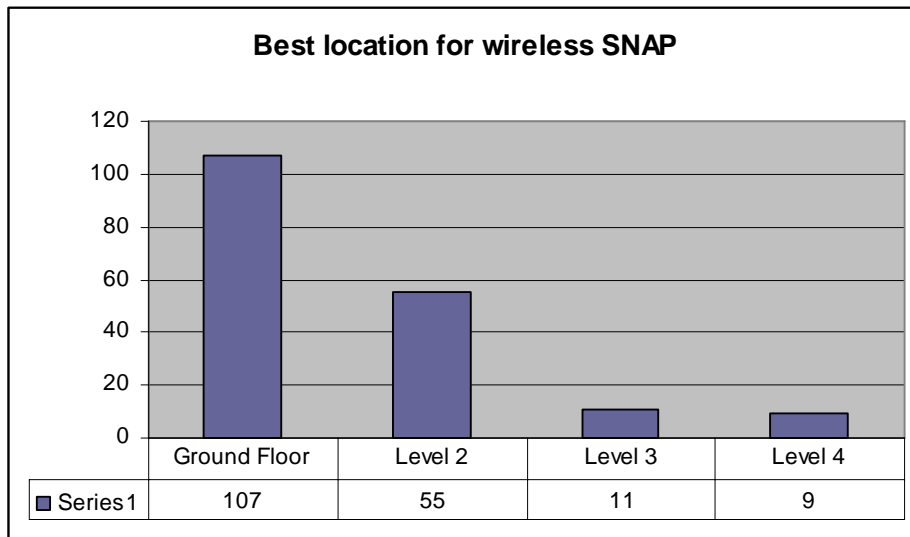
Survey results and associated comments indicate that students' experience using wireless SNAP is varied. Some comments indicate problems in particular parts of the Library while others are very positive about it.



Question 7 - What is the best location to successfully log into SNAP wireless in the Law Library?

"The other levels are ok, but you have to sit on one side of each level, as the further you go towards the guild village side, the less connection you get"

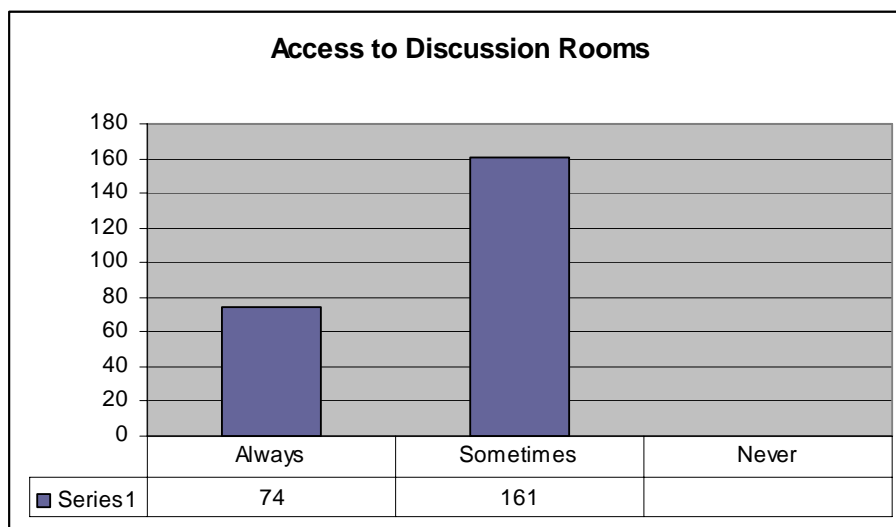
As with question 6 survey results and associated comments indicate that students' experience using wireless SNAP varies according to location and the ground floor is the most favoured area.



Question 8 - How easy is it for you to access a discussion room in the Law Library when you need to do group study?

"The new system with the keys and marker pens is great. Although a little more soundproof would go a long way - people who are studying in the area can hear people in the discussion rooms talking."

Survey results and associated comments indicate that the discussion rooms are extremely popular although some students are not happy with the new booking system and there were a lot of comments with regard to the sound-proofing.

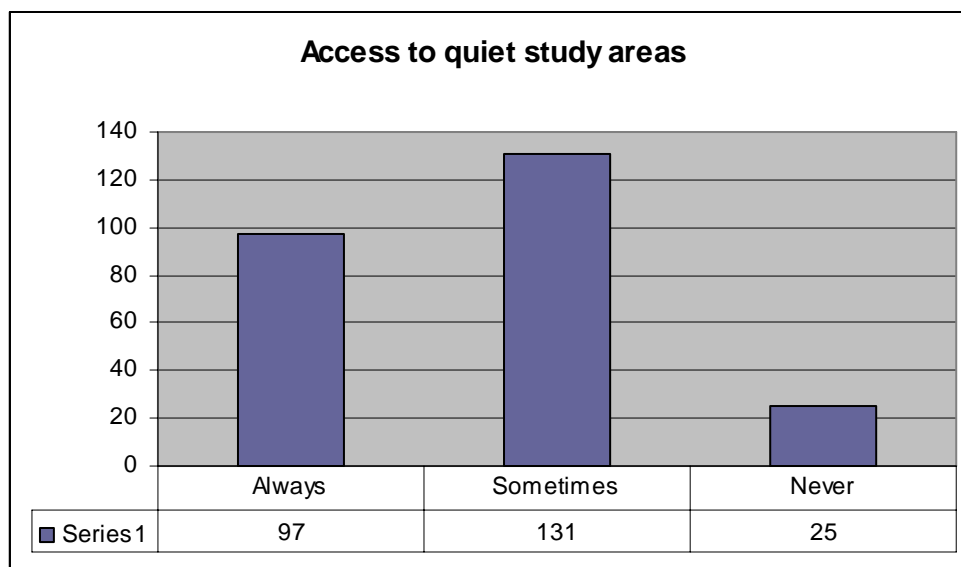


Question 9 - How easy is it for you to find a quiet/silent study area in the Law Library?

"In addition to the noise from the un-soundproofed discussion rooms, students now appear to believe that the Law Library exists solely to talk, both in person and (even more loudly) on mobile phones. When I started here, the first years were told horror stories of older students smashing mobile phones if used in the Library. While I have no doubt this was an urban legend, it certainly served its purpose. Perhaps it could be reintroduced, along with the signs indicating that Level 4 is for silent study only."

Finding a quiet area to study was a key issue for students. Many felt the ground floor was way too noisy while others liked the balance between a noisier ground floor and quiet study areas on the upper levels.

Absence of sound proofing for the discussion rooms was also highlighted by a number of students as a barrier to finding a quiet place to study.

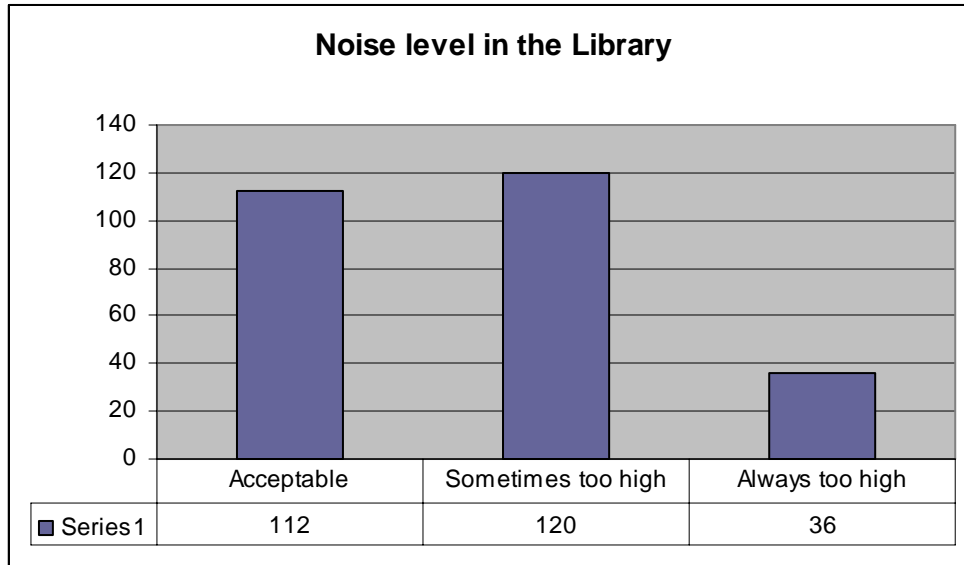


Question 10 - How do you rate the noise level in the Law Library?

"Everyone accepts the ground floor is always a bit noisy but it is frustrating when the higher floors are disrupted by loud conversations between friends and mobile phone conversations conducted at normal volume."

"a lot of people talking on their mobiles - perhaps would be good to provide them somewhere to talk so that they didn't need to leave but so they didn't disturb everyone else."

As with question 9 noise was a key issue for students. Similar comments in question 10 as in question 9. There were also a number of comments regarding the need for policing of noise in the library.

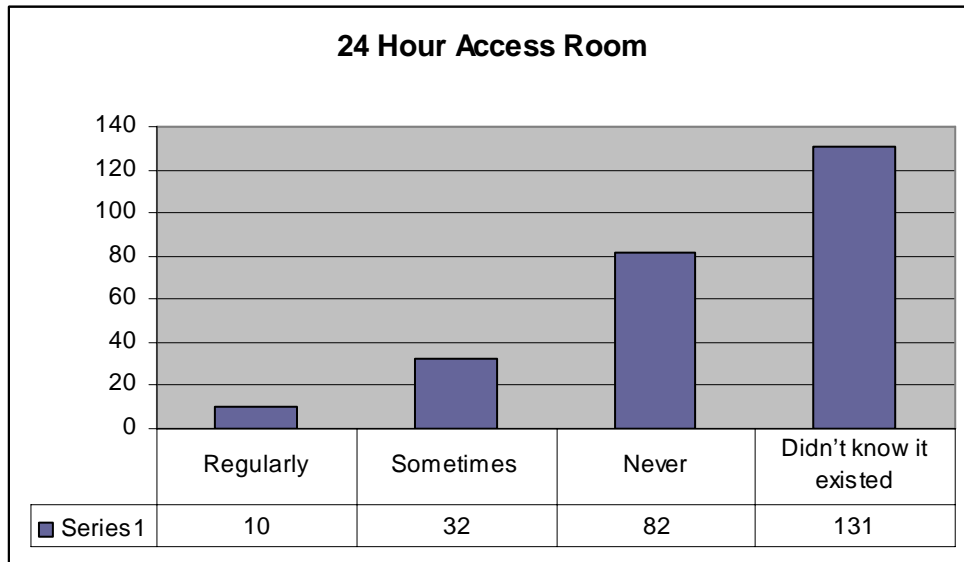


Question 11 - How often do you use the 24 hour access room after the Law Library has closed?

"I use it at least 3 times a week, and I generally get there at around 7:20am when nothing else is open. It has been a huge (!) help to study at uni."

"Up until now I haven't used it, but with 26 weeks of coursework to learn in the next 2 - I plan to use it extensively."

The low levels of regular access to the 24 hour room and the associated comments indicate a large number of students were unaware of its existence. Comments associated with usage were extremely positive.



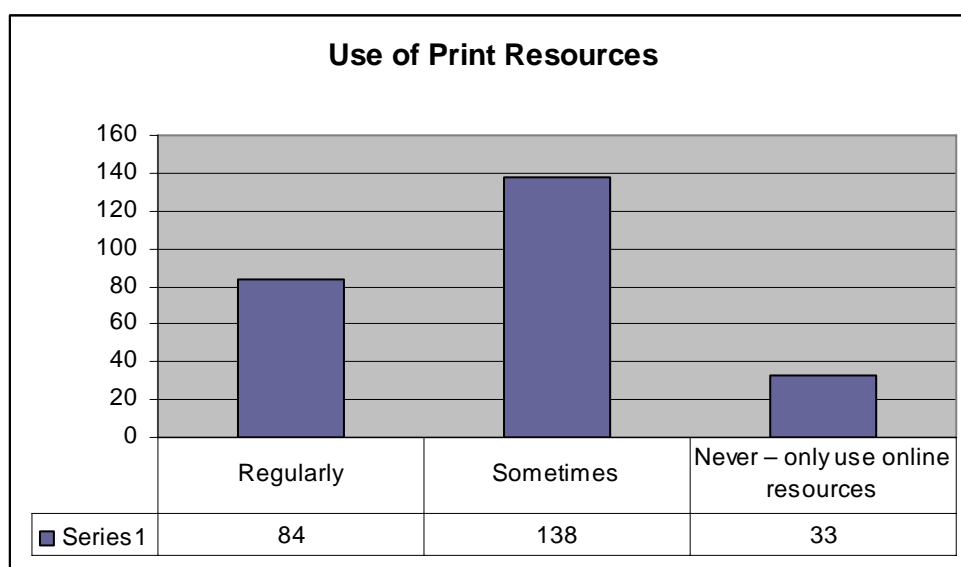
Question 12 - How frequently do you access print resources in the Law Library?

"Although I find a lot of journal articles and recent cases online, I definitely use print resources for textbooks and older cases (and they're not necessary that old - anything over about 10-15 years is, in my experience, quite hard to find online). Also, I like a change from staring at a computer screen!"

"They are useful for assignments and the range of journals the library has is good. I have usually been able to find all the materials I have needed for research essays in print in the library, except if there is only one copy and it is in particularly high demand"

Survey results indicate that access to print resources was still important to students. Some students took this question to be referring to printing and took the opportunity to comment on this.

"Gosh! I must have spent a small fortune printing; got to bring the cost down folks... we ain't working yet. By the way, the laser printers need servicing."

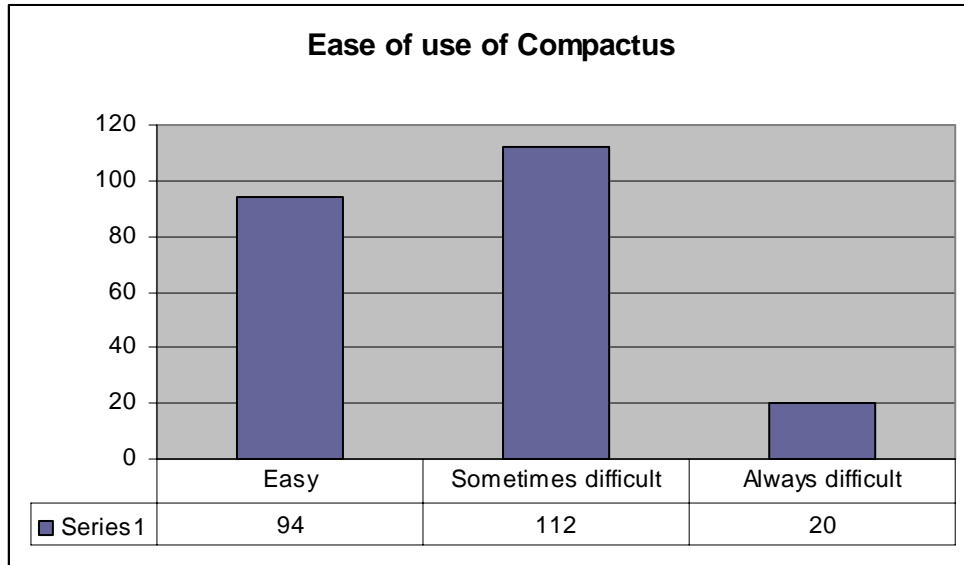


Question 13 - How easy is it to access the collections in the compactus on level 4?

"I don't see why some people are so upset about the compactors. Apart from one time when they were 'out of order' I have found them very easy to use. It's great having all the journals in the same place."

"I'm always a bit worried that I will squash someone when pushing the shelves that I haven't seen and often you have to wait a fair bit of time until people are finished looking for their journal until you can move the shelves but it isn't too problematic in general"

Comments ranged from those who were happy with the compactus to those who could express strongly enough how much they dislike it. There were a number of concerns with regard to safety issues which will need to be reviewed as a matter of priority.

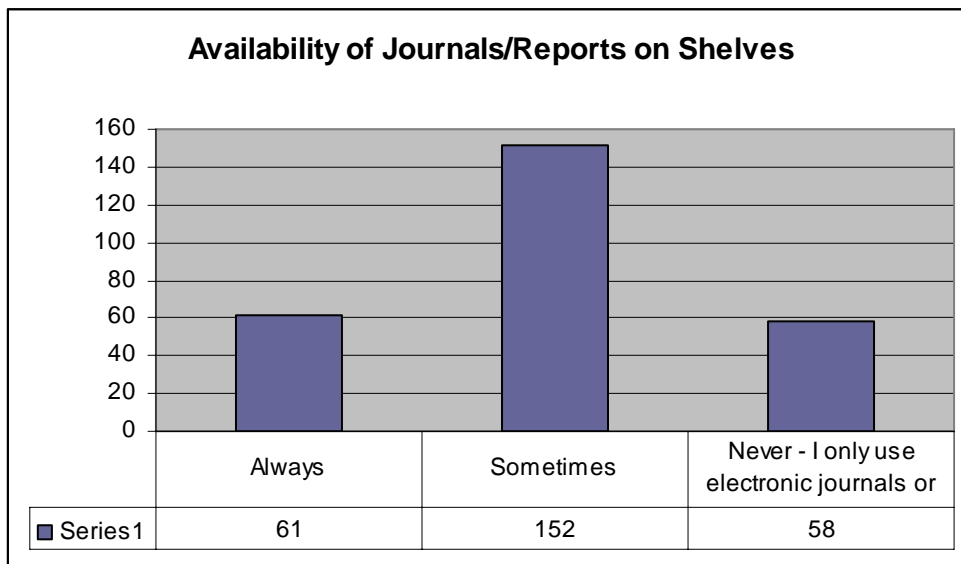


Question 14 - When you need to use print journals or reports in the Law Library how frequently do you find them on the shelf?

"There should be some sort of security measure for the common incident of competitive students hiding journals - this is at the cost of others' assignments and it is not a rare occurrence"

"I can't count the amount of times I've spent hours hunting for journal volumes!! Sometimes they're on the shelf, sometimes they're not (especially if there's high demand for them). It's very hit & miss - & sometimes it's just too bad if you can't get hold of one!"

Most of the issues with regard to access to print journals or reports seem to be with regard to access at peak usage times and the belief that students "hide" volumes from their fellow students.



Question 15 - Any other comments?

Many students took the opportunity to reiterate some of their earlier comments as well as commenting on library service in general, praising the reference staff, questioning the printing quota,

A selection of comments include:

"law library is brilliant really, only problem is the socialites, but it's worth bearing because it's a great library"

"A lot of the comments I've made are simply a result of the fact that the law library is not a particularly big building, and there are a lot of materials to fit in it. I tend not to use the law library if I'm planning a long study session, but in terms of accessing materials and resources, it's fantastic. I've always found the staff helpful and cheerful, and that makes a huge difference. Keep up the good work!"

"Can we PLEASE get toilets in the Law Library? What is with not having them?! It's totally impractical that once students have found somewhere to sit, unpacked all their stuff, set up, etc. every time they need to go to the toilet, they have to pack everything up, go out to the toilet, come back in, find somewhere to sit again, unpack again..."

"Please install more powerpoints on the upper floors and do something to fix the reliability of the SNAP WLAN. Also if the library staff could be a bit more active in stopping people talking. Also I don't really see the point in non-soundproof discussion rooms; it ruins the quiet atmosphere on the fourth floor, but there is nothing you can do to stop people talking because they are doing the right thing by going to the discussion room."

"overall, a very good refurbishment and design outlay"

"The law library is a very useful resource, the reference librarians and often many of the other specialised resources are an absolute godsend. Staff are always very happy to help and are always friendly and attentive."

"With friends in other faculties (and so having exposure to other libraries) the law library is by far the best both in terms of its facilities and the staff friendliness. We once had a technical difficulty and not only did the staff go out of there way to recover the document but when they couldn't, arranged a technician to help straight away."

"The library is much improved, even though the first few months of uni this year were incredibly difficult with most of the important journals in boxes."

Recommendations

| Issue | Recommendation | Action |
|----------------------------------|---|------------------|
| Noise | 1. Work with the Library's Reader Services Management Team to develop a Library wide noise policy, including mobile phone use that can be used as a guide to designating areas within the Law Library for different needs – quiet study, group areas, community/social area. Articulate the policy clearly and liaise with Blackstone and Law School to get it accepted and understood. | <i>Completed</i> |
| | 2. Review private study space and its current arrangement in the Law Library. | <i>Completed</i> |
| Power points | 3. Arrange the installation of additional power points on upper floors. | <i>Completed</i> |
| Photocopiers | 4. Review current photocopier locations to ensure located near collections of most need: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Re-locate photocopier from 3rd floor (Now monos) to 2nd floor (law reports) b. Consider re-locating one photocopier from Reserve to 4th floor (journals) | <i>Completed</i> |
| Access to print resources | 5. Review ways to indicate location of law reports, journals etc both on catalogue and physically with signage | <i>Completed</i> |
| | 6. Add labelling to shelves indicating resources that are "online" | <i>Completed</i> |
| | 7. Improve current signage | <i>Completed</i> |
| | 8. Prepare an A-Z of law reports and location | |
| 24 Hour access room | 9. Bulk email to all law students advising them of 24 Hour access room. | <i>Completed</i> |
| | 10. Increased advertising of 24 Hour access room. | <i>Completed</i> |
| Compactus | 11. Review current safety aspects of Compactus | <i>Completed</i> |
| | 12. Add labelling to shelves indicating resources that are "online" | <i>Completed</i> |
| | 13. Revise signage of compactus | <i>Completed</i> |
| Wireless SNAP | 14. Test wireless SNAP and where necessary improve | |

| | | |
|--------------------------|---|------------------|
| Facilities | 15. Install at least one (preferably two) water fountains in appropriate locations in the Library | |
| | 16. Work with Copying Services to ensure scanning facilities are available in the Law Library | <i>Completed</i> |
| Discussion rooms | 17. Request OFM provide a means of improving the soundproofing of discussion rooms | |
| | 18. Review the procedure for discussion room use | <i>Completed</i> |
| Unresolved issues | Toilets | |