Library Exit Survey 2002

1. Background

In the week of 11-17 March 2002 (Week 5 of Semester 2 and 2 weeks before the Easter break) people leaving the Frewen Library were invited to take part in a short exit survey. The aims of the survey were to establish exactly what people had been doing in the Library, whether they had found it easy to use, whether they were satisfied with their visit and finally what they would most like to change about the Library. A combination of Lickert scales and opportunity for free comments were used on the form.

Students were recruited to administer the survey, although there was also an option for people to take away a sheet and return it later. Responses were gathered between 9am and midnight, Monday to Sunday. Most of the time just 1 student was on duty but between 11.30am and 3.30pm, Monday to Friday there were 2 students on duty as these were identified as busy periods.

2. Number of responses

Monday	260
Tuesday	262
Wednesday	249
Thursday	245
Friday	229
Saturday	138
Sunday	125
Total Responses	**1,508**

The total figure comprised 80% undergraduates, 14% postgraduates, 2.5% staff, 0.7% FE students and 1.4% non-Portsmouth University. 91% of replies were from full-time students/staff and 6% from part-time students/staff.

During the week of the survey the Library exit gate recorded a figure of 16883, which, if taken at face value, would mean that we managed to obtain the views of 9% of people in the Library that week. However, in practice there would have been fewer actual bodies in the Library as the gate figure will include trips in and out to the snack bar/toilet/to answer mobile phones and will also include Library staff going in and out.

Breakdown of responses by department was as follows (top 10 only):

Department/School etc	No. of replies	Percentage
SSHLS	219	14.4%
SLAS	147	9.6%
Business	119	7.8%

Geography	101	6.6%
Pharmacy	97	6.4%
SEES	78	5.1%
CSM	67	4.4%
Psychology	64	4.2%
ICJS	64	4.2%
DIS	58	3.8%

3. Aspects of the Library which need changing

In the last section of the survey respondents were asked what they would most like to change about the Library and were completely unprompted in this question. A large number of issues were raised which fell under the broad headings of policies, resources, staff, environmental issues, and problems with stock or services. The following table summarises the issues which were mentioned most often in free comments:

	Issue	No. of mentions	%	Sample comments etc	Library Response
1.	More Books	286	19%	Includes 95 requests for more up-to-date books and 62 requests for more core textsRespondents came from 22 departments with those from SSHLS and SLAS most likely to mention this, although Pharmacy had the most requests for more copies of core texts	This is a consistent demand in all surveys, in all university libraries. The budget available for books is under pressure from journal price inflation, which is over 10% p.a., and the Library fund increases by c. 3% p.a. The Library works with academic staff to ensure that reading lists are sent to the Library in time to order copies and to investigate alternatives. For "core texts", Teaching & Learning Committees have debated the varying needs between student purchase of texts, Library purchase of multiple copies and the use of photocopies of chapters of texts. The provision of electronic

					copies as an alternative is growing, but costs and copyright issues create many problems
2.	Nothing needs changing	193	13%		
3.	More computers	149	9.9%	People at weekends found lack of free computers a particular problem	The Library needs to maintain a balance in the use of space between bookshelves, study spaces and computer workstations. Present plans for the expansion of computer facilities are based on the possibility of having more wireless laptop computers. Funding is an issue
4.	Faster network	116	7.7%	Computers need reviewing seriously / University network needs improving	The University has invested considerable new funding in networks and in computers. Although there are still some occasions when performance is poor, these are in the decline
5.	Too noisy	75	5%	Have more people patrolling to keep the noise down	The Library is a large open plan building which was designed for the needs of 7,500 students. Space for group study is a major demand that we cannot currently meet, but we designated "Silent" areas which are policed
6.	Cheaper photocopying	71	4.7%	Why can I use photocopiers for less money in a newsagents?	We are required by law to cover all cost involved in photocopying. We also have a considerable investment to make in photocopiers to meet peak demands and to provide convenient charge card facilities. [?13,000 spent in 2002 on new readers]. Costs and income are regularly

					monitored and prices adjusted. Cost was reduced by 1p per A4 sheet in 2000. Most material can be borrowed and copied elsewhere if required
7.	Too hot/stuffy	59	3.9%	Air needs freshening/ claustrophobic	In summer 2003, all the air-handling plant in Frewen will be replaced. This should make a major contribution to improving the environment for staff and students
8.	More Journals	53	3.5%	Respondents came mostly from Geography, Biology and Pharmacy, followed by SEES, Business and Sport	With journal prices increasing at c. 10% p.a., numbers of journals are more likely to decline. The Library is investing in electronic journals and we have already added c. 2,000 titles in this format in the last 3 years
9.	Building needs a face-lift	43	2.9%	Bit grubby looking/Not very welcoming/Miserable place to be/ Too grey/Depressing/ Looks like a tube station/ Hate concrete "prison breezeblocks"	Frewen is essentially 25 years old and is in need of a refurbishment. This is in discussion with the University Estates Department
10.	More study spaces	39	2.6%		See Response no. 2. These could only be provided by removing bookshelves, which is already under strain. This year high capacity shelving is being installed, but this will only allow the current balance of use to be maintained
11.	Books in on catalogue but not on shelves	33	2.2%	Stop people hiding books/ Books in wrong place/ Computer should correspond better to what is on shelves/ Untidy shelves -makes it hard to locate books	There are a number of issues here - ensuring that the books are shelved correctly - ensuring that students look in the correct place on the shelves and know

					about separate collections such as Short Loan - tackling anti-social and other selfish behaviour - making the catalogue as informative as possible. The Library tries to work on all these issues and to keep them under review
12.	Should be able to drink in Library	33	2.2%	Have a water fountain	The Coffee Shop is available for exactly this purpose. We will consider changing the Library Regulations to allow bottled water, retaining the ban on other drinks and on eating. A drinks machine selling water as well as other soft drinks will be available from October 2002
13.	Stay open 24 hours a day	33	2.2%		This would be a major resource issue. Opening hours now are among the most generous in the country, although there a few that open 24 hours
14.	Do something about the toilets	31	2.1%	Dirty/Smell/Clean the loos/ Need refurbishing	We are aware of the problem , but it is not a simple cleaning issue. There is a need to replace all the plumbing. However, additional cleaning periods in the late afternoon are to be provided in the 2002-3 session.
15.	Issue Desk should be open longer	30	2%	Open longer at weekends/ Have someone on the Issue Desk all the time	Already open as long as we can afford within the budget. The desk is open 7 days a week and there is an opportunity to borrow Saturday morning and afternoon, and the same on Sundays

16.	More comfor-table seats	29	1.9%		Seats are gradually being replaced as they wear out. 50 new ones were purchased in the summer of 2002
17.	Fines are too high	23	1.5%	Had to pay ?36.50 for 2 books	Fines are intended as a deterrent. With a variety of ways of renewing books, no student need ever pay a fine, but they are needed to try to ensure that books in demand are shared
18.	Have a room for group work	21	1.4%		See Response no. 5
19.	Unhappy with subject layout	21	1.4%	Each subject should have own section - all in a jumble/ Put books in subject order not scattered about/ Subject on 2 different floors/Layout confusingThe department most represented in these comments was Sport.	The system used is Dewey, by far the most common library classification, but any system will create problems for inter-disciplinary subjects [such as sports science]
20.	Be able to print from depart-mental quota	20	1.3%		To be implemented for the 2002/2003 Session
21.	Improve ormodernize the snack bar	19	1.3%		With the opening of the new Student Centre in September 2002, this is not a high priority. In fact it was completely redecorated early in 2002
22.	Make databases easier	19	1.3%	Search facilities to find journal articles not easy to use / Difficult to narrow down search	Databases are produced by commercial publishers. They are complex and therefore complex to use. The Library tries to alleviate this by providing printed guides, by having enquiry desks close at hand and by providing training in information skills

23.	More reliable computers	18	1.2%		All open access computers were replaced in 2001 with the installation of Windows 2000. Our records do not show a major problem with reliability and a good record of faults being fixed in a timely fashion
24.	Snack bar open longer/in the evenings	17	1.1%		See Response no. 21
25.	Need more light	17	1.1%	Put lights on desks	In the summer of 2003, the lighting system in Phase 1 of the building will be completely replaced
26.	Be tougher on mobile phones	15	1%	Hand mobiles in at front desk	New or revised policy for 2002/2003 being discussed. Taking phones off students is not a solution.
27.	Have more photo-copiers	15	1%		Space for photocopiers is limited and the 6 machines cater for most demands. See also Response no. 6
28.	Need a bigger Library	14	0.9%		Yes?.
29.	Have a change machine	14	0.9%		This has been investigated but capital costs are prohibitive. The policy is to try to avoid having to handle cash at all, by providing card systems. See also response no. 20
30.	Borrow books for longer	13	0.9%		See Response no. 1
31.	Individual study booths/desks needed	11	0.7%		See Response no. 5
32.	Better computer	11	0.7%	Sometimes can't get on at the time booked/Awkward asking people to leave -	This is permanently under review and a computer booking

			booking system			could have notification through the computer instead	system for the computers will be introduced in line with other University open access facilities

4. Activities undertaken in the Library

The following table summarises activities undertaken in the Library and whether respondents thought they had been successful or not:

Activity	No. Undertaking Activity	Completely Successful	Not At All Successful
Looked for books or journals	789	50%	7%
Used a bookable computer	742	62%	3.4%
Borrowed books or journals	518	87%	0.8%
Sat at a desk and studied	516	63%	2%
Returned books or journals	439	87%	1.6%
Asked staff for help	283	74%	4%
Used the photocopiers	281	69%	1.4%
Searched for journal articles using the computer	271	51.6%	9%
Looked at the current journal display	208	55%	2.4%
Other	192	81%	2%

These results show that whilst looking for books and journals was the most common activity, only half of the respondents were completely successful in this and some of the free responses provide further information in this respect e.g. books were shown as being available on the catalogue but could not be found on the shelves. Respondents were most likely to be completely satisfied with either borrowing or returning books or journals - 87% for both - and since these activities should be straightforward in most cases, we would expect a high success rate for them.

5. Responses to how easy the Library was to use and satisfaction with visit

Rating of 1 (not at all) for how easy it was to use the Library: 1.3%
Rating of 4 or 5 for how easy it was to use the Library: 88.2%
Rating of 1 (not at all) for how satisfied with visit: 3.8%
Rating of 4 or 5 for how satisfied with visit: 80.4%