

Main Library User Survey 2017: Responses to Key Comments

1. Seating

Seating remains one of the major concerns for many library patrons despite the introduction of more learning spaces on campus in recent years. We are pleased that our quiet spaces are welcome by many users. As such, there are unmet needs especially during the peak seasons. In the coming two academic years, G/F and 2/F Main Library as well as the Medical Library will undergo a series of renovation works including addition of more flexible and well equipped seats for users with different learning styles. On the other hand, in order to deter seat hogging and other inappropriate behaviours that affect our provision of a conducive study environment, a set of guidelines has been introduced to facilitate the action of frontline staff against such behavioural problems. New signage will also be installed at open seats and research carrels to educate users that personal belongings left unattended for a prolonged period of time could be removed by library staff from unoccupied seats. At the same time, useful comments from this survey will serve as good reference for the review of existing policies governing the online booking system for seats in various library locations. It is hoped that the holistic approach outlined above will help to optimize the use of all our space resources.

2. Computers

The 129 comments on Computer are categorized as below:

1. Insufficient PC	65
2. Slow performance, boot up slow & upgrade computer hardware	30
3. Failed to connect printers	4
4. Software update / new software request	12
5. Software configuration issue	5
6. Others which are not related to PC	13

Insufficient PC was a major concern from the respondents of this survey, the lion's share of which were undergraduates and alumni. Given the large user population of the Main Library, it is almost not possible to have a public PC available when it is needed during peak hours. In this connection, we will enhance the computer

booking system to fully utilize the existing PCs and ensure that they are available to users who have placed bookings.

As to the performance of the public PCs, we will review the computer hardware of existing machines and its performance in terms of the installed applications and PC boot up time. Those public PCs that cannot meet the performance requirement will be replaced or upgraded in early 2018. The library is also going to employ the new Desktop Management System to handle software update in a fast and efficient way.

3. Service quality in general

As in previous years, we are very glad to receive many positive and supportive comments to the overall service quality of the Libraries. It is especially encouraging that these feedbacks were among the top ten categories this year. Nevertheless, we also realize there are areas for improvement on top of those mentioned in the major comments listed here. The new library system introduced in July 2017 will hopefully provide plenty of opportunities to streamline our workflows and improve service design, thus enhancing user experience in the long-run. Another planned service improvement is the RFID stock taking exercise of open stack collections in Main Library. After a pilot run in early 2017 and stabilization of all the collection locations finalized after several major renovation projects, we are going to actively address the all-time concern of missing items on shelf through regular stock taking. It is expected that more effective monitoring of our collections and services can be achieved through the lens of big data.

4. Wi-Fi connectivity

The 72 comments on Wi-Fi connectivity are categorized as below:

Signal, coverage & connection issue	12
Unstable signal	21
Need improvements	31
Others	8

With the help of Information Technology Services (ITS) of the University, a thorough survey of Wi-Fi connectivity in the Main Library was conducted last year. The findings had enabled us to re-configure the AP settings in terms of frequency options and signal strength, especially those on Level 3. On the other hand, additional APs were installed in the Main Library following the opening of the 2/F main entrance and the setting up of a seating area on the G/F.

We will continue to work with ITS colleagues to better pinpoint the areas where improvements are needed, such as resolving traffic congestion issue during peak hours/seasons by installing more APs and configured them with 5GHz only especially on heavy-usage areas, and reviewing and enhancing the Wi-Fi network on G/F and 2/F during the forthcoming renovation. In the long term, we need to consider adopting advanced Wi-Fi technology, e.g. Mesh-Wi-Fi, ac standard.

5. New learning spaces

The feedbacks from our target users for these facilities are mostly positive. The wide spectrum of learning spaces ranging from quiet study and group collaboration facilities can suit the needs of most undergraduate and postgraduate students. We also realize that the new learning spaces are very popular among patrons other than HKU students. However, the high usage of these spaces also posts big challenges for our maintenance services. Rapid wear and tear, diverse user behaviours as well as competition for both physical and digital resources sometimes cause frustration or even disputes between users. The findings of an in-depth review of the Level 3 facilities and services conducted in 2016 and 2017 have confirmed the above situation. To resolve all these problems, we have a number of planned actions such as the renovation works mentioned under the first comment, more systematic maintenance efforts, replacement of worn out items and upgrade of management systems. We aim at conducting constant review of these facilities and providing timely response to users according to priority and availability of resources.

6. Privileges and fees for library services

The Libraries strive to provide all patrons as much privileges as possible taking into account a number of factors such as our mission, resource availability, usage, licence restrictions of database vendors, etc. While we can manage to adjust some privileges like length of borrowing period within the constraints of limited resources, further changes that involve scarce resources like spaces require prudent analysis and consultation of stakeholders. The Libraries will look into the suggestions for extended privileges and explore possibilities of offering certain options via a new mode of subscription for fee-based membership.

7. Cleanliness

We will continue to make all possible efforts to improve the cleanliness of the Main Library especially the hygiene of the washrooms. We will keep working closely with the Estates Office to increase the frequency of daily cleaning services and to explore the funding possibility for the renovation of washrooms in both the New Wing and the Old Wing. In the meantime, we are actively considering

incorporating the G/F toilets into the forthcoming Main Library G/F and 2/F renovation project.

8. Access to electronic resources

We hope the new search tool, Find@HKUL, will facilitate access to the electronic resources from our collection. Through a single search box, patrons can search for both the Libraries' collection as well as articles by choosing the search scope "HKUL + Articles". By changing the search scope to HKALL, patrons can also search the collection of other UGC-funded libraries in Hong Kong. As the new academic year begins, patrons can join our orientations and trainings to learn more about the library resources and services. Please watch out for e-Notice and the training website.

The Libraries provides access to a rich and diverse e-book collection offered in different platforms, such as ebrary, Ebscohost, ebook Collection and Superstar (超星數字圖書館). Each ebook platform is different. Some provide direct PDF download while others may require a software client to enable offline viewing. Online help is usually available on the ebook platform. But, if you still encounter access problems, please feel free to Ask-a-Librarian.

We understand that there may sometimes be access issues to electronic resources. This might be attributable to a number of reasons, such as change in subscription platform, configuration changes on the vendor side. We will continue to work closely with vendors in order to provide a reliable access to electronic resources.

9. Library staff

We are thankful to the appreciative comments in general but are equally mindful to feedbacks that our members of staff require constant improvement in attitude, skills or knowledge. In addition to the guidelines mentioned under the first comment, the Libraries also introduced a set of guiding notes for frontline staff to deliver excellent service. We will also draw reference from constructive user comments in this survey to update our staff competency list with a view to meeting the increasing user expectation and challenges in a rapidly changing profession.

10. Printers

We heard the voices for more efficient and user-friendly printing services and are lining up actions to render better experience in this critical service area. Some quick improvements scheduled for the 2017/18 academic year will be the relocation of less used printers to popular spots like Level 3 of Main Library, strengthening of maintenance services, and increased publicity of express printers on Level 3 and 2/F

Main Library. In the long-run, we will look into a basket of improvement proposals including replacement of old printers, introduction of quota printing like the uPrint and cloud printing, etc.

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