Main Library and the Fung Ping Shan Library

User Survey 2019: Responses to Key Comments

Seating

Seating remains one of the major concerns for many library patrons despite the introduction of more learning spaces in recent years. We are pleased that the G/F and 2/F of the Main Library, as well as the Medical Library, have undergone a series of renovation works including the addition of more flexible and well-equipped seats for patrons with different learning styles. The number of seats at the Main Library has been increased from 1,586 in 2016 to 1,720 in 2019. Future renovation planning will include more seats to meet the growing demand. During peak seasons, seating will always present a challenge.

Apart from the current guidelines and to support the frontline staff against seat hogging, reminder notes have been distributed to those seats with unattended items. New signage will also be posted to remind patrons that personal belongings left unattended for a prolonged period could be removed by library staff. Frequent patrolling will be arranged ahead of examination periods. At the same time, useful comments from this survey will serve as a guiding reference for the review of the 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.

Service quality in general

Compared with 2017, the overall service quality of the Libraries shows continuous improvement. It is very encouraging that we have received many positive and commendable comments on our services, facilities, resources and library staff. These comments also echoed the quantitative survey findings and ranked no. 3 among the top ten categories this year. Nevertheless, there are always areas for improvement. We will continue to enhance the Find@HKUL functionalities to provide a better user experience.

Facilities

With the opening of the new learning commons on the G/F and the technology-rich Ingenium on the 2/F Main Library, we are engaging various campus partners to utilize these new spaces to develop their interdisciplinary work. If you are interested in these initiatives, please do not hesitate to let us know.

Beyond the physical space, the library webpage is under revamp to optimize users' virtual experience.

We understand that the required course readings are in high demand. Due to space and budget constraints, we are refrained from purchasing multiple copies. To address this dilemma, we have introduced the Reading List Service, through which instructors can request to shorten the loan period of a book to expedite its circulation among students. Furthermore, the reading list is integrated into the Moodle course site with links to the print and online resources in the library system. When recommending books for purchase, we encourage patrons to consider eBooks which can be acquired with single or multiple copies without putting a strain on shelving space. Contact our subject librarians if you need assistance.

To support e-Learning, we are collaborating with TeLi, ITS and Faculty of Education to develop an e-Learning Resource Hub which is expected to be launched before the new semester in September 2020. The Libraries will also strengthen its learning and research support, including research data management and scholarly communication. We look forward to collaborating with our faculties and students to create an impact on society at large.

Online Search (including Find@HKUL)

Find@HKUL provides a simple one-stop search for books, selected online articles and more in the Libraries. Through exclusive Book Title and Book Author search boxes available in the Libraries Homepage, patrons can find printed and electronic books quickly. By changing the search scope to HKALL, current HKU staff and students can also find and request available printed books from other UGC-funded Libraries in Hong Kong. For further Find@HKUL guides, please refer to https://libguides.lib.hku.hk/FindatHKUL.

However, Find@HKUL being a handy and quick tool is good at discovering indexed information, it does not guarantee access to all full text articles retrieved. In fact, full text accessibility depends on a number of contributing factors such as subscription coverage, source of the article, and occasional changes to the subscription platform and configuration on the vendor's side. In many cases, the external changes are beyond the Libraries' knowledge and control. Nevertheless, we will continue to work closely with vendors to provide reliable access to electronic resources. If you encounter any access problems, please feel free to Ask-a-Librarian.

Meanwhile, you are encouraged to access our databases for in-depth research. The Libraries provides access to rich and diverse electronic resources offered on~~in~~ different platforms. To find a relevant database, simply start with https://libguides.lib.hku.hk/az.php and locate by Subjects or Database Types. To browse and access selected e-journal articles, BrowZine is also a user-friendly platform to consider.

Booking

Requests for more flexible booking sessions dominated most of the feedback from the survey respondents. At the same time, we also heard the voices for more study facilities and discussion rooms. These illustrate that they are prevalent among our patrons who are competing for them to support their learning needs. In this connection, we will continue to monitor the usage of the facilities and review the existing policies governing the online booking system to find out if any change is needed. Planning is in progress to renovate the 1/F Main Library and convert the Breakout Zone on Level 3 into multipurpose facilities to meet the demand. As to the useful comments on the booking system, they will serve as a reference for us to explore how improvements could be made to provide better user experience when using the system.

Discussion Rooms

The Libraries will continue to review the group collaboration facilities in the Main Library, which can cater to the learning and research needs of current undergraduate and postgraduate students. Improvement works will be continuously carried out. The condition of worn-out items in the Discussion Rooms will be closely monitored, and replacement will be arranged as soon as

practicable. For the WiFi connection within Discussion Rooms on Level 3, we will continue to work with ITS to identify the areas where further improvements are needed.

Too Cold

The Libraries are an advocate of sustainable development, and we are aware of this situation. Owing to the old design and the age of the air-conditioning facilities, we have uneven air ventilation resulting in non-uniform temperatures within the Main Library. The Library will continue to monitor the situation and keep trying to find a temperature setting that is suitable for the majority of the patrons. Library patrons are also advised to locate a seat closer to/further away from the air grilles that suit their needs or to find a spot in the Library with their preferred temperature, as different areas may have slightly different temperatures.

In collaboration with ITS and Estates Office, we have participated in a pilot project called *Internet-of-Thing* (IoT) which will automatically monitor the indoor temperature of the Libraries to explore the feasibility to display the temperatures at selected areas so that patrons can choose the physical environment (including temperature) that suits their needs.

User Behaviours (Food and Drink, Seat Hogging)

Among 111 comments on user behaviours, over a third were about seat hogging. In the previous years, notices have been distributed to those occupants of hogged seats. In the coming year, patrolling will be strengthened during peak hours and actions will be taken to deter seat hogging. Besides, new roving services will be launched to offer assistance to patrons, including taking necessary actions against undesirable user behaviours. It is hoped that the comprehensive measures outlined above will help to deter seat hogging.

On the other hand, several users provided comments about the food and drink policy. Owing to the hygiene issues and the considerations of the preservation of library materials, the *no-food* policy was implemented in September 2019. The comments are divided. Some users welcomed this policy while some preferred to have food in dedicated areas of the Main Library. We will monitor the situation and review the food-and-drink policy accordingly.

Power

Most comments are suggestions for more power sockets. To support *Bring Your Own Device* (BYOD), more power sockets have been installed after the renovation on 2/F and G/F of the Main Library. Also, each carrel is equipped with power sockets to facilitate charging. We will continue to include more power sockets in our future renovation plans.

Wireless LAN

With the proliferation of smartphones and tablets, more users provided comments on the performance and availability of the Wireless LAN. The number of wireless network access points has been increased from 120 in 2017 to 189 in 2018. In the 2018 upgrade, the standard of IEEE 802.11ac was adopted for the wireless network on 2/F and G/F of the Main Library to provide a faster

connection. In the following year, the 4/F wireless network was upgraded, and more access points added. We will actively monitor the usage of the wireless networks and plan upgrades to the network as needed.

Computers

Computers are always one of the hot resources in the Main Library. Given our large user population, it is almost impossible to have a public PC available during peak hours. To deter seat hogging of workstations, our counter staff will remove unattended belongings from reserved workstations. The number of workstations has been increased from 406 in 2017 to 480 in 2018. We will continue to review the usage of computers and arrange the provision of computers in the Main Library.

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