The Libraries conducted a User Survey between 9-22 November 2009 to gather information about library usage, what services and resources are important to users and how well we have performed. Included in the total of 266 questionnaires are comments and suggestions for improvement. Below is a summary of the top 10 issues identified in these comments, together with our responses and indications of actions and plans. (Figures after Respondents’ Comments indicate number of comments.)

We thank all of our users who took their time to complete the survey and send us their comments.

1. Electronic resources

➢ RESPONDENTS’ COMMENTS (41):
A substantial amount of comments were from alumni, Circle of Friends (CoF) membership card holders, and HKU SPACE students, who expressed a wish for remote access to electronic resources instead of having to be confined to on site use in library.

➢ LIBRARY’S RESPONSE:
We understand that resources such as Westlaw, Lexis or other law journals databases are particularly important for alumni, CoF members in the legal field, and law students from HKU SPACE. But under current license agreements with vendors, remote access to library subscribed resources is limited to students and staff only. We will keep negotiating with various vendors for better terms when reviewing licenses so that remote access may be extended to user groups other than students and staff.

2. Printed resources

➢ RESPONDENTS’ COMMENTS (26):
The majority of comments focus on the availability of update editions and multiple copies of student textbooks.

➢ LIBRARY’S RESPONSE:
We currently monitor hot items with multiple holds every week to place these on reserve or to buy additional copies. We will work more closely with faculty teaching staff to provide us with reading lists in advance to ensure that the required student texts are in place. Suggestions for new or additional copy purchase are always welcome, although resources do not always permit these to be taken forward immediately. If there are specific resources that you would like to see added to the library’s collection, please let us know through our Book Recommendation Online (BRO) e-form (http://www.lib.hku.hk/general/e-form/eform_book.html) or simply by filling in our Comments & Suggestions form.

While building our collections to support teaching and research remains our priority, we can no longer aspire to own everything that students, faculty and researchers need. Collaboration among libraries is essential in providing materials needed and we encourage users to take advantage of collaborative resource sharing through HKALL (Hong Kong
3. Opening hours

- **RESPONDENTS' COMMENTS (25):**
  The general sentiment is for longer opening hours. Alumni, CoF membership card holders and HKU SPACE students wish to see the library open longer, while undergraduates would like the library to extend its hours during exam period.

- **LIBRARY'S RESPONSE:**
  There had been previous attempts in the past years to extend the library's opening hours (e.g. trials of weekdays closing at 11 pm and all-day opening on Sundays). Studies of entrance figures and usage pattern reflected that usage during the extended hours and on Sundays had been consistently low, making it extremely cost ineffective to maintain the extra hours.

Without additional staffing and in view of the considerable service and resource implications to extend hours, compromise is felt to be necessary by shifting our service focus back to weekdays and Saturdays - when usage is found to be heaviest by the majority of our user community.

We understand that users generally wish for the convenience of 24x7 opening. But until extra funding or staffing resources is available, we regret that hour extension is not possible without compromising on security and service level. Within the resources made available to us, we will strive to maintain opening hours that best meet the needs of users. During examination period, we encourage users with a need for study space to make use of the 24-hour Student Learning Centre in the Main Library.

4. Service quality

- **RESPONDENTS' COMMENTS (18):**
  The majority of comments about staff are positive. Staff is generally considered helpful and friendly, and we thank our users for their encouraging remarks. A service issue raised by many respondents is that books are not reshelved quickly enough.

- **LIBRARY'S RESPONSE:**
  We have redeployed our shelvers and helpers so that an additional round of reshelving of library books is done at 4 pm, and with book resorting in the reshelving bay in the evening for better retrieval by users who need to locate books.

5. Seating

- **RESPONDENTS' COMMENTS (17):**
  Some expressed the need for more soft seating area such as sofa or open seating. There is also an overwhelming plea for power sockets to be provided.

- **LIBRARY’S RESPONSE:**
  Given the space constraints and our forthcoming move to the new Law Building, our ability to reconfigure library space for more soft seating is limited. But please be assured that soft seating space will be amply provided for in the new law library. As for the need for power
sockets, the interim measure before we move to the new library is that plenty of power extension sockets are available for loan from the library counter. Feel free to seek help from the library counter whenever you cannot locate a seat with power socket.

6. Computing facilities

- **RESPONDENTS' COMMENTS (17):**
  Respondents would generally like to have more computers, and faster breakdown repair.

- **LIBRARY’S RESPONSE:**
  We will work with the library’s Systems Department to improve the repair time. For those who have difficulties finding a computer, a laptop is available for loan from the counter, more information at [http://lib.hku.hk/techsupport/laptoploan.html](http://lib.hku.hk/techsupport/laptoploan.html). For quick search on Westlaw, we also encourage users to make use of the special Westlaw kiosk near the Newspaper area to save time queuing for a workstation during peak hours.

7. Physical environment – Air conditioning

- **RESPONDENTS' COMMENTS (16):**
  Comments tend to be mixed: there are some who thought that the library is not well ventilated and is stuffy; but most felt that it is too cold.

- **LIBRARY’S RESPONSE:**
  The library temperature is something we continue to monitor and adjust, but given our location in K.K. Leung Building, a multi-purpose building, there is no isolated AHU (air handling unit) for the library and the air-conditioning system is centrally controlled at 25°C, following the University's recommended temperature setting. However, the relative humidity (RH) of such a temperature would reach the mould germinating environment of 70-80% RH, and indeed, many books on the second floor of the Law Library had developed moulds since the library’s temperature had been set as such. This has necessitated us to adjust the centrally controlled temperature to the range of 22-24 °C. Even so, this range is higher than the standard recommendation adopted by other libraries in the world, usually in the range of 20 ± 1 °C to 20-22.2 °C.

  To strike a good balance between conservation, user comfort and energy saving, we constantly adjust the standalone air-conditioning units within the library premises under different weather. In cool weather or winter season, we adjust these units within the range of 23-25 °C, depending on the location of these units. Nonetheless, the overall temperature of the library is still centrally controlled within the range of 22-24 °C. It is essential that we maintain the library at a stable, optimal temperature with controlled humidity so that library collections will remain physically available for use by future generations of students and researchers.

  We urge users to try different study areas to suit their preference. In case there are specific location(s) in the library which you find uncomfortably cool, please let library staff know. We will adjust the standalone units to ease the situation or, if necessary, have these further looked into by the University's Estates Office.
8. Photocopying

- **RESPONDENTS' COMMENTS (14):**
  Respondents are concerned about the frequent breakdown of the photocopiers, quality of photocopying and paper jam problems.

- **LIBRARY'S RESPONSE:**
  During the second semester, 5 of the 6 photocopiers in the library have been upgraded including one which also provides colour printing. We hope that with this general upgrade, users will now have hassle-free copying. Also, to better attend to breakdowns or problems encountered, the intercom system on the 2/F of the library has been relocated to the photocopying area (near the lifts) for users to quickly page library staff for help.

  Plan is also underway for 1 photocopier on each floor of the library to double up as a printer. We hope to be able to launch it during 2010-11.

9. Noise

- **RESPONDENTS' COMMENTS (14):**
  Most are concerned about the excessive noise in the library especially where people tend to gather for discussion or chatting.

- **LIBRARY'S RESPONSE:**
  We understand that users nowadays come to the library for various purposes and that absolute silence across the library can sometimes be difficult, especially with collaborative learning. To cater to users with different needs, beginning January 2010, selected areas on the 1/F and 2/F in the library have been designated as **Silent Zone**, where absolute silence is maintained for those engaged in reflective study.

  We are pleased to report that this zoning has been working very well so far, with most users observing the protocols we have set for this special zone -- thank you to everyone for your cooperation and for helping us make the diversity in the use of space possible!

  Library staff will, of course, continue to enforce rules to reduce excessive noise in the library but at times, when these nuisances may not be readily detected by staff, we urge users to report cases to staff at the counter so that immediate action can be taken.

10. Wireless LAN

- **RESPONDENTS' COMMENTS (12):**
  The unanimous complaint was that wireless LAN connection in the library is extremely unstable and weak.

- **LIBRARY'S RESPONSE:**
  Currently there are 4 APs (access points) in the Law Library and all of these 4 were replaced in February 2010 with new models of the third generation, each providing theoretical bandwidth of over 100Mbps. We hope that the stronger signal range and increase in speed will bring about a much improved wireless computing experience to those accessing electronic resources in the library.

  *June 2010*