LIBQUAL+™ LIBRARY SURVEY 2007

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The LibQual+™ Library Survey was conducted in November 2007. The Library received 2,928 valid responses and half of the respondents supplied written comments.

- Core questions of the survey covered three service dimensions of Library service quality: Affect of Service *(helpfulness and competency of library staff)*; Information Control *(access to and provision of print and electronic resources)*; and Library as Place *(physical environment)*.

- For each question, respondents were asked to indicate their minimum acceptable service level, their desired service level, and their perceived service level provided by the Library on a scale from 1 (low) to 9 (high). Two gap scores were calculated: Service Adequacy *(Perceived Score – Minimum Score)* and Service Superiority *(Perceived Score – Desired Score)*. The gap scores are scaled such that higher scores are more favorable.

- **Overall performance:** The results showed that our users are satisfied with the quality of Library services. The rating is benchmarked against the survey outcomes of peer institutions, including 177 colleges and universities around the world. The Library's overall service performance rating of 0.7 *(adequacy mean scores)* is notably higher than the peer groups' average rating of 0.49.

- **Affect of Service:** The Library received higher scores in Affect of Service *(adequacy mean scores of 0.88)*, which measures the quality of interactions with library staff and various attributes of the staff (courteous, knowledgeable, caring, helpfulness, etc). This high rating is also supported by many written comments praising the Library services and staff.

- **Information Control:** This area required the greatest attention and improvement since its scores were lower than the other two dimensions. Postgraduate students and academic staff have high expectations for accessing electronic resources from home as well as the provision of the print and electronic collections that support their work.

- **Library as Place:** Expectations in this service dimension are higher among undergraduate students than among postgraduate students and academic staff. For most students, the Library is still an important place for quiet study and many survey comments also indicate that group study space is being important as well.

1. The Survey

The University Library System conducted a library survey from November 1-30, 2007. The survey, called LibQUAL+™, was developed and administered by the Association of Research Libraries in the United States to gauge users' perceptions, preferences, and expectations of library services. More than 1,000 libraries around the world have participated in the LibQUAL+™ since it began in 2000.

The survey consisted of 22 core questions to measure the quality of Library services in three dimensions:

- Affect of Service (AS) - helpfulness and competency of library staff
- Information Control (IC) - access to and provision of print and electronic resources
- Library as Place (LP) - physical environment

In addition to the core questions, the survey contained questions on general satisfaction with the Library, information literacy outcomes, library use, and an open-ended comment box where users could submit their feedback on library service.

2. Response Rate

The following table shows the response rate by user group. In total, 2,928 surveys were completed.

Table 1. Respondents by User Group

User Group	Completed	Percentage
Undergraduate:	1,680	57.38%
Postgraduate:	793	27.08%
Academic Staff:	226	7.72%
Staff:	220	7.51%
Library Staff:	9	0.31%
Total:	**2,928**	

3. Core Survey Questions Summary

Scoring

There were 22 core questions in the survey. For each question, respondents were asked to indicate the minimum level of service they would find acceptable, the desired service level that they expect, and their perceived service level (the level of service that they believe the Library provides) on a scale from 1 (low) to 9 (high). Two gap scores were calculated:

Service Adequacy = Perceived Service Score – Minimum Service Score
Service Superiority = Perceived Service Score – Desired Service Score

Service Adequacy vs. Service Superiority

Service adequacy is an indicator of the extent to which the Library is meeting the minimum expectations of our users. A positive service adequacy score indicates that users' perceived level of service quality is above their minimum acceptable level and a negative score implies a need for improvement.

Service superiority is an indicator of the extent to which the Library is exceeding the desired expectations of our users. A negative value of service superiority means that users' perceived level of service is below their desired level of service. The superiority gap is usually negative since it measures the difference between perceived and ideal library service. However, a negative score is a cause for concern.

In general, the higher the adequacy and service superiority scores, the better the Library's performance.

Results

Table 2 displays mean or average scores for each core question. Overall, respondents indicated that the performance of CUHK Library was above their minimum expectations and that the Library's greatest strength was in the area of Affect of Service *(helpfulness and competency of library staff)*, which received higher adequacy scores (0.88). This rating was also supported by many written comments praising the Library service and staff.

The largest gap between the minimum expectations and perceived level of service appeared in Information Control *(access to and provision of print and electronic resources)*. This area requires the greatest attention and improvement.

Table 2. Core Questions Summary

ID	Question Text	Minimum (M) Mean	Desired (D) Mean	Perceived (P) Mean	Adequacy (P-M) Mean	Superiority (P-D) Mean
Affect of Service						
AS-1	Library staff who instill confidence in users	5.35	7.07	6.39	1.03	-0.68
AS-2	Giving users individual attention	5.04	6.48	5.87	0.83	-0.61
AS-3	Library staff who are consistently courteous	5.88	7.35	6.82	0.94	-0.54
AS-4	Readiness to respond to users' enquiries	6.04	7.42	6.87	0.83	-0.55
AS-5	Library staff who have the knowledge to answer user questions	6.03	7.43	6.95	0.92	-0.49
AS-6	Library staff who deal with users in a caring fashion	5.78	7.21	6.65	0.87	-0.55
AS-7	Library staff who understand the needs of their users	5.90	7.36	6.63	0.73	-0.74
AS-8	Willingness to help users	6.00	7.46	6.88	0.89	-0.57
AS-9	Dependability in handling users' service problems	5.82	7.24	6.67	0.85	-0.58
Overall for Affect of Service		**5.75**	**7.22**	**6.63**	**0.88**	**-0.59**
Information Control						
IC-1	Making electronic resources accessible from my home or office	6.01	7.78	6.59	0.58	-1.19
IC-2	A library Web site enabling me to locate information on my own	6.07	7.62	6.72	0.65	-0.90
IC-3	The printed library materials I need for my work	5.99	7.46	6.52	0.54	-0.93
IC-4	The electronic information resources I need	6.14	7.65	6.58	0.44	-1.07
IC-5	Modern equipment that lets me easily access needed information	6.13	7.64	6.72	0.59	-0.92
IC-6	Easy-to-use access tools that allow me to find things on my own	6.10	7.70	6.70	0.60	-1.00
IC-7	Making information easily accessible for independent use	6.17	7.66	6.80	0.63	-0.86
IC-8	Print and/or electronic journal collections I require for my work	6.18	7.70	6.60	0.43	-1.10
Overall for Information Control		**6.10**	**7.65**	**6.66**	**0.56**	**-1.00**
Library as Place						
LP-1	Library space that inspires study and learning	5.95	7.62	6.59	0.64	-1.03
LP-2	Quiet space for individual work	6.37	7.83	6.76	0.39	-1.07
LP-3	A comfortable and inviting location	6.06	7.57	6.89	0.83	-0.68
LP-4	A haven for study, learning, or research	6.20	7.74	6.73	0.54	-1.01
LP-5	Space for group learning and group study	5.55	7.20	6.28	0.73	-0.91
Overall for Library as Place		**6.04**	**7.60**	**6.66**	**0.62**	**-0.94**
Overall :		5.95	7.47	6.65	0.70	-0.82

Peer Group Comparison

177 colleges and universities participated in the LibQUAL+™ survey from January to July 2007. The following table compares the performance of CUHK Library in each dimension of library service quality with that of peer institutions, where n is the number of respondents.

Table 3. Service Dimensions – CUHK Library vs. Peer Group

Dimension	Minimum (M) Mean	Desired (D) Mean	Perceived (P) Mean	Adequacy (P-M) Mean	Superiority (P-D) Mean
Affect of Service					
CUHK (n=2,919)	5.75	7.22	6.63	**0.88**	**-0.59**
Peer Group* (n=97,718)	6.48	7.81	7.14	**0.66**	**-0.67**
Information Control					
CUHK	6.10	7.65	6.66	**0.56**	**-1.00**
Peer Group	6.82	8.14	7.12	**0.30**	**-1.02**
Library as Place					
CUHK	6.04	7.60	6.66	**0.62**	**-0.94**
Peer Group	6.39	7.80	6.89	**0.50**	**-0.91**
Overall:					
CUHK	**5.95**	**7.47**	**6.65**	**0.70**	**-0.82**
Peer Group	**6.59**	**7.94**	**7.08**	**0.49**	**-0.86**

including 177 colleges and universities participated in the survey from January-June 2007

The CUHK Library's gap scores in Affect of Service, Information Control, and Library as Place exceeded its peer groups. Its overall service performance rating of 0.7 *(adequacy mean scores)* was notably higher than the peer groups' average rating of 0.49.

Highest Expectations/Needs of CUHK Library Users

Table 4 displays the most desired service dimension by user group. The results indicated that all user groups had the highest desired level or expectations in Information Control, except undergraduate students who rated this service dimension below Library as Place.

Table 4. Most Desired Service Dimensions - Summary by User Group

Dimension (Desired Score – Mean)	Undergraduate n=1,680	Postgraduate n=793	Academic Staff n=226	Staff n=220
Affect of Service	7.13	7.42	7.31	7.11
Information Control	7.58	**7.86**	**7.83**	**7.29**
Library as Place	**7.69**	7.62	7.23	7.21

Below are the five most important services by different user groups based on the LibQUAL+™ results on desired mean scores.

Undergraduate
- Quiet space for individual work (7.91)
- A haven for study, learning, or research (7.77)
- Library space that inspires study and learning (7.69)
- Easy-to-use access tools that allow me to find things on my own (7.66)
- Making electronic resources accessible from my home or office (7.65)

Postgraduate
- Making electronic resources accessible from my home or office (8.05)
- The electronic information resources I need (8.01)
- Print and/or electronic journal collections I require for my work (7.93)
- Making information easily accessible for independent use (7.89)
- A haven for study, learning, or research (7.87)

Academic staff
- The electronic information resources I need (8.06)
- Making electronic resources accessible from my home or office (8.05)
- Print and/or electronic journal collections I require for my work (8.04)
- Easy-to-use access tools that allow me to find things on my own (7.77)
- A library web site enabling me to locate information on my own (7.74)

Staff
- Quiet space for individual work (7.50)
- Making electronic resources accessible from my home or office (7.46)
- A library web site enabling me to locate information on my own (7.36)
- Easy-to-use access tools that allow me to find things on my own (7.35)
- Making information easily accessible for independent use (7.35)

4. Other Survey Questions Summary

The following two tables show the mean scores of users' satisfaction with the Library and with the Library's information literacy efforts. Respondents by user group rated their levels of satisfaction on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 9 (strongly agree).

Table 5. Users' Satisfaction Questions

Questions Summary - Mean	Undergraduate n=1,680	Postgraduate n=793	Academic Staff n=226	Staff n=220	Overall N=2,919
In general, I am satisfied with the way in which I am treated at the library.	6.88	7.05	7.03	6.71	**6.92**
In general, I am satisfied with library support for my learning, research, and/or teaching needs.	6.76	6.87	6.83	6.59	**6.78**
How would you rate the overall quality of the service provided by the library?	6.87	6.97	6.92	6.74	**6.89**

Table 6. Information Literacy Outcomes Questions

Questions - Mean	Undergraduate n=1,680	Postgraduate n=793	Academic Staff n=226	Staff n=220	Overall N=2,929
The library helps me stay abreast of developments in my field(s) of interest.	6.25	6.56	6.52	6.27	**6.36**
The library aids my advancement in my academic discipline.	6.62	6.86	6.77	6.44	**6.69**
The library enables me to be more efficient in my academic pursuits.	6.73	6.91	6.92	6.45	**6.77**
The library helps me distinguish between trustworthy and untrustworthy information.	5.36	5.75	5.56	5.84	**5.52**
The library provides me with the information skills I need in my work or study.	6.20	6.50	6.21	6.33	**6.29**

Overall, respondents were satisfied with the Library service and the average scores were 6.86 out of 9. Satisfaction with the last two questions in Information Literacy Outcome was lower compared to all other questions. Thus, the delivery of information literacy instruction to library users is becoming more important due to the proliferation of information sources.

5. Comments

1,486 respondents (51%) supplied written comments. Below are the most common comments in different service areas:

Library Service
- Overwhelmingly positive – most of the comments praised and complimented the Library and its staff
- Interlibrary Loan Service and HKALL are useful

Collections
- Acquire more books and journals in various disciplines
- Increase textbooks
- More audio visual materials
- Announce new additions on the Web

E-resources
- Electronic resources are useful and easily accessible
- More e-journals and e-books
- Some online resources are complicated to use
- Promote e-resources

Computing facilities
- More computers and scanners

- Provide higher-speed printers
- Printing facilities are too expensive
- Install MS Office in all computers
- Extend the loan period of laptop computers

Study Space and Group Discussion Rooms
- More single seats for individual study
- More group discussion rooms
- Maintain the manual booking for group study rooms
- Set up discussion zones in branch libraries

Facilities
- More comfortable desks and chairs
- All photocopying machines should accept Octopus card
- AVM machines are always out of order
- Lift for reaching the Law Library
- Keep the washrooms clean

Circulation
- Extend the loan period of books and audio visual materials
- Increase the maximum number of renewals for library materials
- Provide online forms for requesting inter-branch book delivery service

Noise
- Excessive noise and use of cell phones in Libraries
- Implementation of cell phone policy

Temperature and lighting
- The temperature is too low
- Lighting should be improved

Library Hours
- Extend the opening hours

The Library will continue to review the survey results and comments to improve its services and facilities.

References

Association of Research Libraries (2007), "2007 LibQual+ survey highlights. Session I: January – June", available at: http://www.libqual.org/documents/admin/ LibQUALHighlights2007_ SessionI.pdf (accessed March 1, 2008)

Association of Research Libraries and Texas A&M University (2008), *LibQual+ 2007 Survey. The Chinese University of Hong Kong*.