

# IALS Library Reader Satisfaction Survey 2020

## “You said, we did” Summary Report

In order to find out how satisfied readers are with the IALS Library’s collections and information services and to help us continue to improve the Library, a survey of library users was carried out between Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> March and Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2020. The survey questionnaire asked 21 questions, including new one-off questions relating to the impact of the IALS Transformation Project.

### **HIGHLIGHTS IN BRIEF**

#### **IALS Transformation Project – Reader Satisfaction Results**

Although we were initially concerned that the IALS Transformation Project building works might have a negative impact on this year’s survey results (as the works had been ongoing throughout much of the beginning of the 2019/20 academic year), we are very pleased to report that not only was there no general drop in reader satisfaction ratings, but that almost all the ratings improved.

The improved individual satisfaction ratings are mirrored by the high rating and very positive comments given in response to the new one-off survey questions which asked about the long-term and temporary effects of the major IALS Transformation Project. Readers were asked, firstly, to rate and comment on the permanently transformed library space and new library services, and secondly, to comment on how the temporary building works were handled in terms of keeping the noise and disruption to a minimum and communications. The reader satisfaction rating for the newly transformed library space was **97.4%** which is very impressive. It is also very reassuring to have evidence that our detailed plans for the new library space and the new library services are meeting reader expectations and needs. Almost all of the comments for the new library space were very positive and complimentary and can be read in Appendix A of the Full Survey Report. Here are a few examples:

- “Very well laid out, and it is a better environment than ever in which to work.”
- “I come here to be productive and am always happy with the spaces available.”
- “Wonderfully quiet and the computers are excellent.”
- “Much more comfortable space, very happy with the improvement.”
- “Beautiful space.”
- “It is now a modern, extremely well-resourced study centre.”

The comments on the handling of the building works were more mixed with some readers complaining about the inevitable noise. However, a majority seem to understand the reasons for the noise and disruption and the long-term benefits for readers and many complimented us on our temporary arrangements to keep the library open throughout the duration of the works. The full list of comments can be read in Appendix B of the Full Survey Report. Here are a few examples:

- “Great, I believe. I always knew what was going on, either through Facebook or the info board at the entrance.”
- “Could have been worse. Builders always friendly and pleasant.”
- “There were a few insignificant noises. I sit mostly at the 3rd floor and it didn't really impact my study experience.”
- “Some serious noise issues, but this was inevitable. Otherwise excellent.”
- “The result has been worth any inconvenience.”
- “Was expecting it to have been much worse.”

## Other Reader Satisfaction Survey Results

- The top rating was for our research skills public training sessions at **98%** (97% in 2019).
- The overall satisfaction rate increased to **97.5%** (95.5% in 2019).
- This year we had **TEN** satisfaction ratings **above 90%** which were for helpfulness of library staff at 96.6%, range of print journals at 96.6%, study facilities at 95.1%, range of electronic journals and databases at 94.7%, availability of PCs at 91.5%, range of books at 91.4%, ease of use of the library catalogue at 91.3% and closing times at 90.4% (as well as for our research skills public training sessions and for overall satisfaction). In 2019 we received eight satisfaction ratings above 90%.
- We had **SEVEN** satisfaction ratings **above 80%**. These included opening times at 89.7%, quality of computing facilities at 88.9%, ease of access to e-resources at 88.4%, availability of photocopiers at 86.6%, study environment – noise at 86.1%, availability of printing at 83.9% and sufficient copies of LLM textbooks at 83.7%.
- We continued to have **ONE** satisfaction rating **above 70%**, this was for study environment - heating at **76.5%**. Even though this is the second highest mark we have ever received on this question, IALS Library is disappointed to note that the rating for heating has dropped slightly from last year's record high mark. Part of the recent refurbishment project included the installation of a sophisticated new library heating and cooling system with onsite temperature controls, which we hoped would assist in our control over local temperatures in the reading rooms. Despite its introduction, the comments section shows that we do not always seem to have achieved a comfortable temperature over all floors of the library. However, this is counterbalanced by some respondents praising the heating levels within the library. Library staff will continue to monitor temperatures in the reading rooms as part of their regular patrols and will ask the supplier to review the working of the new system.
- We continued to have **ONE** satisfaction rating **above 60%**, this was for the cost of copying, scanning and printing at **64.4%**. This rating is higher than the 62.9% 2019 rating. Indeed, this rating has been improving steadily for a number of years.
- Some positive comments made several times:
  - “Wonderful, quiet place to conduct research – I always have a productive day at IALS.” (x 16)

- “Superb range of resources, the library has everything I need.” (x 15)
- “The helpful and polite staff are second to none!” (x 11)
- “Quite simply, an excellent library.” (x 8)

## **LIBRARY ACTIONS: YOU SAID, WE DID**

- **The IALS Transformation Project has resolved previous building-related issues**

Previous annual reader satisfaction surveys contained a number of comments about the deteriorating fabric of the building and requests for a major refurbishment of the Library. In particular there were complaints about the lack of seating on occasion, the Wi-Fi system, the noise from the busy roads outside, the old desks and chairs, the inadequate radiators, the high room temperatures during the summer months and the need for new group study rooms for discussion and debate. In addition, the need for a refurbished library was causing the individual building-related satisfaction ratings to start to decline. The Management Team were fully aware of these building-related issues and brought them to the attention of the University of London. In early 2018 the University’s Board of Trustees agreed to invest **£11.5 million** to fund a major refurbishment of the IALS building and library.

### ***Major improvements to IALS Library:***

Although some minor refurbishment works funded by donations from outside bodies are still be completed on the archive room and lower library floors, it can be concluded from the improved ratings and overwhelmingly positive comments contained in the 2020 survey report that the refurbishment undertaken using the University of London’s investment of £11.5 million has been very successful and achieved its main aims. The main library improvements are as follows:

- The Library has been completely refurbished and re-designed to make better use of space.
- There is now a new library entrance on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor with views looking out over Russell Square.
- New high-quality large exhibition cabinets for displaying our rare books and extensive archive collection have been installed in the new library entrance area on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor.
- The entrance and exit gate systems have been replaced with up-to-date RFID technology-based library security equipment.
- Secondary glazing to reduce the impact of outside traffic noise has been installed on all library floors.
- The library carrels have been moved in order to open up the public library areas at the front of the building to more light and views across Russell Square.
- Across the library space there are 50 additional study desk spaces to increase capacity.
- New modern desks and adjustable chairs have replaced the old furniture throughout the library.
- Two group study rooms for use by readers have been created on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. These can be booked by readers themselves using their library card.
- A new group training room with increased capacity has been created on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor.

- A reference advice room for one-to-one training has been created on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor.
- A fully equipped room with IT equipment and appropriate software for use by readers with special needs has been created on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor.
- The private library research carrels for senior researchers and IALS visiting fellows have been re-designed and increased by 8 to a total of 38.
- A new sophisticated cooling and heating system has been installed on the roof of the building which should give us more control over the temperatures in the library reading rooms.
- The building's ageing plant equipment and services infrastructure have been completely overhauled and updated with new Wi-Fi access points installed.
- A new free self-issue "laptop for loans" service has been installed offering users the ability to borrow laptops themselves within the library.

We would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank our Project Officer, Andrew Beach, Deputy Director and Head of Capital Projects, Lee Winters, our architects Burwells and Overbury PLC for managing the building works so efficiently and effectively and for constantly considering the needs of our users and staff throughout the duration of this very successful IALS Transformation Project.

## IALS Library Reader Satisfaction Survey 2020: Summary Results

In order to find out how satisfied readers are with the library's collections and information services, a survey of readers was carried out between Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> March and Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2020. Respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction on a 4-point scale from 1 ("rarely meets needs") to 4 ("usually meets needs") for a number of categories. In total 118 completed survey forms were returned. This summary includes the responses to the 19 specific questions for the 2019 as well as the 2020 survey, reporting on the overall percentage across all reader categories. The questions that resulted in the highest and lowest satisfaction response rates are indicated.

The main results are as follows. By ticking 3 or 4 on the 4-point scale we have assumed that the respondent's needs are either often satisfied (3) or usually satisfied (4).

Question	% of respondents who ticked 3 or 4	
	2019	2020
Range of books?	91.9%	91.4%
Sufficient copies of core LLM textbooks?	81.7%	83.7%
Range of print journals?	95.4%	96.6%
Range of electronic journals and databases?	93.5%	94.7%
Ease of access to e-resources?	81.9%	88.4%
Ease of use of library catalogue?	92.5%	91.3%
Quality of computing facilities?	83%	88.9%

<b>Availability of PCs?</b>	86.7%	<b>91.5%</b>
<b>Photocopiers?</b>	82.9%	<b>86.6%</b>
<b>Printing?</b>	82.5%	<b>83.9%</b>
<b>Cost of photocopying / printing?</b>	62.9% (lowest)	<b>64.4% (lowest)</b>
<b>Helpfulness of library staff?</b>	98.2% (highest)	<b>96.6%</b>
<b>Electronic training sessions?</b>	97%	<b>98% (highest)</b>
<b>Study facilities?</b>	92.6%	<b>95.1%</b>
<b>Study environment – quietness?</b>	80.6%	<b>86.1%</b>
<b>Study environment – heating?</b>	79.6%	<b>76.5%</b>
<b>Opening times?</b>	89%	<b>89.7%</b>
<b>Closing times?</b>	88.1%	<b>90.4%</b>
<b>More materials available in the library or more lending?</b>		
- in library	67.6%	<b>71.2%</b>
- more lending	32.4%	<b>28.8%</b>
<b>Overall, how satisfied?</b>	95.5%	<b>97.5%</b>

Thank you very much to everyone who completed a form. The feedback is very helpful for the development of library collections and information services.