

IALS Library Reader Satisfaction Survey 2021 “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 21st June and Sunday 27th June 2021. The survey questionnaire asked 21 questions, including one new question relating to the library’s provision during the Coronavirus pandemic. In total 53 completed survey forms were returned.

HIGHLIGHTS IN BRIEF:

- The two joint top ratings were for our overall satisfaction rate and research skills public training sessions which were both at **98.1%** (97.5% and 98% respectively in 2020).
- The satisfaction for our library provision during the Coronavirus pandemic was **94.3%**, which is very reassuring.
- In total this year we had **TEN** satisfaction ratings **above 90%** which were study facilities at **95.9%**, helpfulness of library staff at **94.4%**, range of electronic journals and databases at **94.2%**, study environment – quietness at **94%**, range of books at **92.5%**, range of print journals at **92.5%**, study environment - heating at **92%** (as well as the above 90% ratings for overall satisfaction, our research skills public training sessions and our library provision during the Coronavirus pandemic). In 2020 we also received ten satisfaction ratings above 90%.
- We had **SIX** satisfaction ratings **above 80%**. These included opening times at **88.2%**, ease of access to e-resources at **88%**, quality of computing facilities at **87.5%**, sufficient copies of LLM textbooks at **86.8%** (up 3.1% on the 83.7% rating in 2020), ease of use of the library catalogue at **86%** and closing times at **82.4%**.
- We had **TWO** satisfaction ratings **above 70%**. These were for availability of PCs at **77.8%** and availability of photocopiers at **76.1%**. We also had **ONE** satisfaction rating **above 60%** which was availability of printing at **68.9%**. Lower ratings for these services in 2020/21 are not surprising as the availability of our PCs, photocopiers and printing were severely affected by the pandemic. Public PCs were not available most of the time because of the initial difficulties in cleaning the machines in between use. Public photocopiers were available throughout the pandemic period (with users provided with antibacterial wipes) but the centralised public printing system had a number of faults which the University supplier was very slow to rectify.
- We had **ONE** satisfaction rating **above 50%**, this was for the cost of copying, scanning and printing at **57.4%**. This rating is surprising to us as printing and photocopying were completely free throughout the pandemic period.
- Finally, given the choice, most of our respondents wanted more books available in the library (**75.5%**) rather than more lending outside the library (**24.5%**). This is consistent with our results for this question every year since the survey’s inception.

Space was also made available on the survey form for readers to make individual comments:

- Wonderful library.
- Could find the materials I needed.
- Quiet, no distractions and very pleasant staff.
- Everything i needed was there and no noise.
- Although not been able to physically visit, online access is fine.
- IALS is by far my favourite library in London. It is very comfortable for studying and I can concentrate easily. It has many books and electronic resources.
- Friendly staff, good opening hours, great books.
- Came to get a book, took less than 5 minutes!
- I enjoy the environment and the resources available.
- The study environment is clean and quiet. The librarians are helpful when I seek assistance. Wide range of books, journals and e-resources. I am an IALS student, and I am proud of the library.
- I found the resources I was looking for.
- I had a very quick and efficient visit today.
- Whenever I visit, I come away satisfied and know that if a publication is not available, I will be informed when it is so.
- I always find what I seek. I am so far from a physical library that I shudder to think how I could have managed without the IALS.
- Fantastic range of materials.
- The librarians are always smiling and welcoming.
- It is the best library I have ever been to!
- I mostly find what I am looking for. Also, it is a very comfortable study space.
- So many wonderful materials.

“You Said, We Did”: Ials Library’s Response To The Coronavirus Pandemic:

We feel that the highlight of the survey is the reader satisfaction rating of **94.3%** for our response to the Coronavirus pandemic. IALS Library staff worked very hard behind the scenes to provide as robust and consistent a research support service as possible despite the changing UK government restrictions and University guidelines and in very uncertain times.

Since the start of the Coronavirus pandemic and the imposition of the UK government’s strict lockdown restrictions and the initial closure of the IALS building, IALS Library focused on serving its national membership of PhD students, researchers and academics, the LLM students registered at UCL, LSE, KCL, QM and SOAS and our own School of Advanced Study (SAS) postgraduate students and academics. This objective was achieved by:

1) Firstly, providing **remote** access to our expanded subscription e-resources, expanded online library services (such as our new “live” webchat service, virtual Reference Desk and virtual Admission Desk), our expanded online research training programmes, our expanded online research guides and podcasts and our in-house digital legal research tools. Remote usage was very high throughout the pandemic with many emails of thanks received from researchers.

2) Secondly it was achieved by gradually and safely reopening our **onsite** library research collections and services as far as the government’s health and safety restrictions allowed. Onsite usage grew throughout the pandemic period but was necessarily restricted by periodic lockdowns and the government’s “stay at home” health and safety messaging and travel restrictions.

a) Book loans from July 2020:

Once the University gave us permission to re-open the IALS building and the strict University health and safety protocols were fully implemented, from July 2020 readers were be able to

borrow and return loanable IALS Library books onsite at 17 Russell Square using our new “Click, Collect & Return” book loan service: <https://ials.sas.ac.uk/library/new-click-collect-return-service>. This service increased borrowing privileges markedly to 10 books over 4 weeks for both main collection and short loan collection books for all library academic members. Significantly IALS also sourced and purchased as many eBook alternatives to printed short loan books as possible and we believe LLM students chose to access the eBook versions of books rather than come into Russell Square to physically borrow books.

b) Scanning services from August 2020:

From early August 2020 we resumed limited access to our commercial IALS Document Supply Service and offered our own SAS students a new book and journal Scanning service: <https://ials.sas.ac.uk/scanning-service-find-out-how-it-works>.

c) Bookable study desk service from September 2020:

From September 2020 readers were able to make an online booking for a “socially distanced” study desk on the 3rd floor or 4th floor within the IALS Library at 17 Russell Square: <https://ials.sas.ac.uk/library/book-a-study-desk-service/book-study-desk-find-out-how-it-works>. Once inside the Library, readers were also able to browse our extensive national law collections on the 3rd floor and 4th floor and/or request books and non-borrowing materials to be fetched by library staff from the library floor L2 and library floor L3 to consult at their booked study desk. In line with the other SAS libraries and SHL, we started by opening 3 days a week, but soon were able to open 5 days a week. Self-service copiers were also made available for readers. The IALS archives also reopened for consultation.

The safety of our readers and staff was our top priority throughout the pandemic, so it is enormously satisfying to have received such a high satisfaction rating for our response to the Coronavirus pandemic.

Comments:

The received appreciative comments below are full of genuine thanks from our members.

- Even though study space is limited I am always accommodated. Sanitizers at every step!
- The improvements to the library have made it a useful study space.
- Because of the wide range of electronic resources.
- I am appreciative of the library offering relatively long slots upon re-opening. Very different from the BL!
- The staff are extremely helpful, and the library is an ideal place for quiet work.
- Keeping open the possibility of booking a desk has been a lifeline.
- I have used the Library as a quiet place to research online, read and write. It is a wonderful library.
- Ability to browse bookshelves and staff assistance has been very helpful. There is enough space between people which is very important.
- Still able to access materials online which I need for my research.
- Short opening hours.
- I have always found the staff very approachable if I can't find things.
- Better opening times and book limits compared to KCL. Good safety measures.
- The spacing out of reading desks is very good. The glass separators to protect readers from staff also very good, and the one-way system. Lots of sanitizer.
- Would have preferred longer opening at the weekend.
- Library is clean and tidy, and although the opening times are shorter and fewer desks available, we have everything we need. Sanitiser available everywhere. E-resources and staff help when I was distance learning was amazing. I just wish we could use the group study rooms.

- Because of great access to online resources.
- Pleased the Library has remained open as it holds all of the primary sources I need for my research. Library support is vital to research, and so far there have been no problems that the librarians could not solve. They are proactive in locating books for me, and knowledgeable enough to recommend decent alternatives. I also like the fact that fewer people are in the library because of the pandemic!
- Comprehensive, clearly explained and practical.
- IALS has saved me during the pandemic, even more so with the convenience of the use of electronic resources.
- Booking a study desk is easy, the space is quieter than ever and feels very safe.
- Very well handled.
- I really like the book a desk system. The library provides a nice, clean and safe study environment.
- Library should have reopened sooner after lockdown.
- The most quiet and organised, clean library in London!
- The library feels like a safe place to be.

IALS Library Reader Satisfaction Survey 2021: 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 21st June and Sunday 27th June 2021. 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 53 completed survey forms were returned. This summary includes the responses to the 20 specific questions included in the 2020 as well as the 2021 survey, reporting on the overall percentage across all reader categories. There was one additional new question relating to the library's response to the Coronavirus pandemic, making 21 questions in total this year. The questions that resulted in the highest and lowest satisfaction response rates are indicated. 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	
	2020	2021
COVID measure (NEW)		94.3%
Range of books?	91.4%	92.5%
Sufficient copies of core LLM textbooks?	83.7%	86.8%
Range of print journals?	96.6%	92.5%
Range of electronic journals and databases?	94.7%	94.2%
Ease of access to e-resources?	88.4%	88%
Ease of use of library catalogue?	91.3%	86%
Quality of computing facilities?	88.9%	87.5%
Availability of PCs?	91.5%	77.8%
Photocopiers?	86.6%	76.1%
Printing?	83.9%	68.9%

Cost of photocopying / printing?	64.4% (lowest)	57.4% (lowest)
Helpfulness of library staff?	96.6%	94.4%
Electronic training sessions?	98% (highest)	98.1% (=highest)
Study facilities?	95.1%	95.9%
Study environment – quietness?	86.1%	94%
Study environment – heating?	76.5%	92%
Opening times?	89.7%	88.2%
Closing times?	90.4%	82.4%
More materials available in the library or more lending?		
- in library	71.2%	75.5%
- more lending	28.8%	24.5%
Overall, how satisfied?	97.5%	98.1% (=highest)