

IALS Library Reader Satisfaction Survey 2023: Full Report

Introduction

A survey of readers was carried out between Monday 27th March and Sunday 30th April 2023. An online questionnaire was published on the website and a link was emailed to all current library members. Printed versions were distributed around the library and publicised using posters. Respondents had the chance to win £50-worth of vouchers in a prize draw.

The same basic survey questionnaire has been used every year since 2003 with occasional tweaks such as adding a question on ease of access to electronic resources in 2008, and this year combining the questions on availability on printing and photocopying facilities as they are in effect the same machine, and instead asking a question regarding the availability of seating. The survey form can be found online and is included in the appendices.

Respondents rate their satisfaction with the range of print and online material, the catalogue, access to online resources, IT facilities, copying and printing, helpfulness of staff, training sessions, study facilities, study environment and opening hours. They are also asked how often they use the library, and whether they prefer more books to be available for reference in the library or more lending.

A four-point satisfaction scale is used:

1 = rarely satisfied, 2 = sometimes satisfied, 3 = often satisfied, 4 = usually satisfied

Percentage satisfaction rates are calculated based on the number of people selecting 3 (often satisfied) or 4 (usually satisfied) for a given question.

Response rate

173 survey forms were returned (compared to 35 last year):

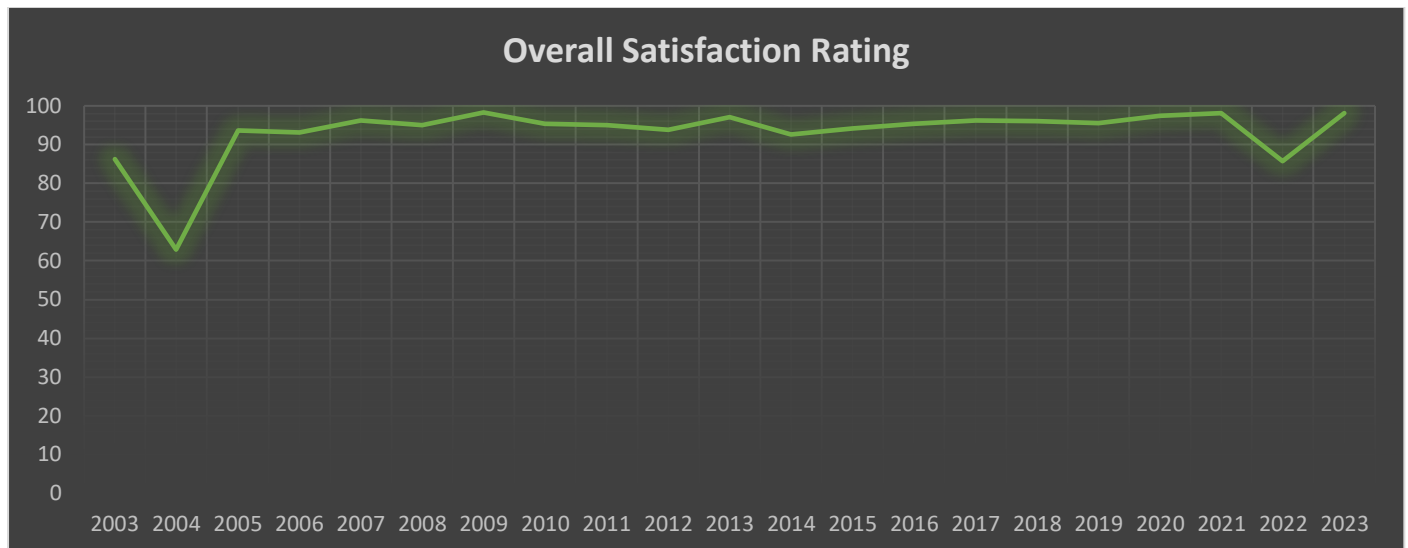
- 72 from LLM / other postgraduate taught students
- 55 from postgraduate research students
- 43 from academic and research staff

3 respondents were private scholars. Respondents did not always answer every question.

38 people said they used the library daily, **67** weekly, **39** monthly and **27** rarely.

Overall satisfaction (Question 5: Overall, how satisfied are you with IALS Library?)

98.2% of respondents answered either that they were often or usually satisfied (85.7% in 2022 and 98.1% in 2021). This was our highest rated question, and a pleasing return to form after last year's understandable dip as we tried to return to normal post-pandemic.

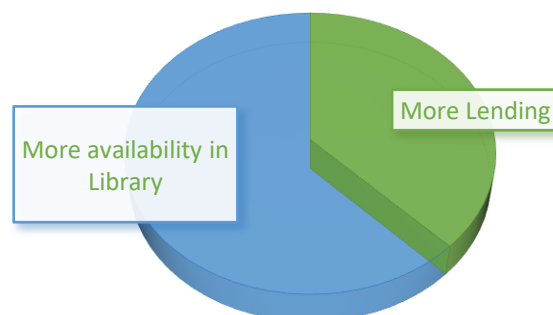


Overview of responses

8 survey questions received satisfaction rates (often or usually satisfied) or 90% or over. The rates for each are given below, with full details in the appended tables.

62.4% of respondents preferred more books to be available in the library for reference; 37.6% preferred more lending outside the library. *This is consistent with previous years and shows our readers understand our role as a primarily reference facility.*

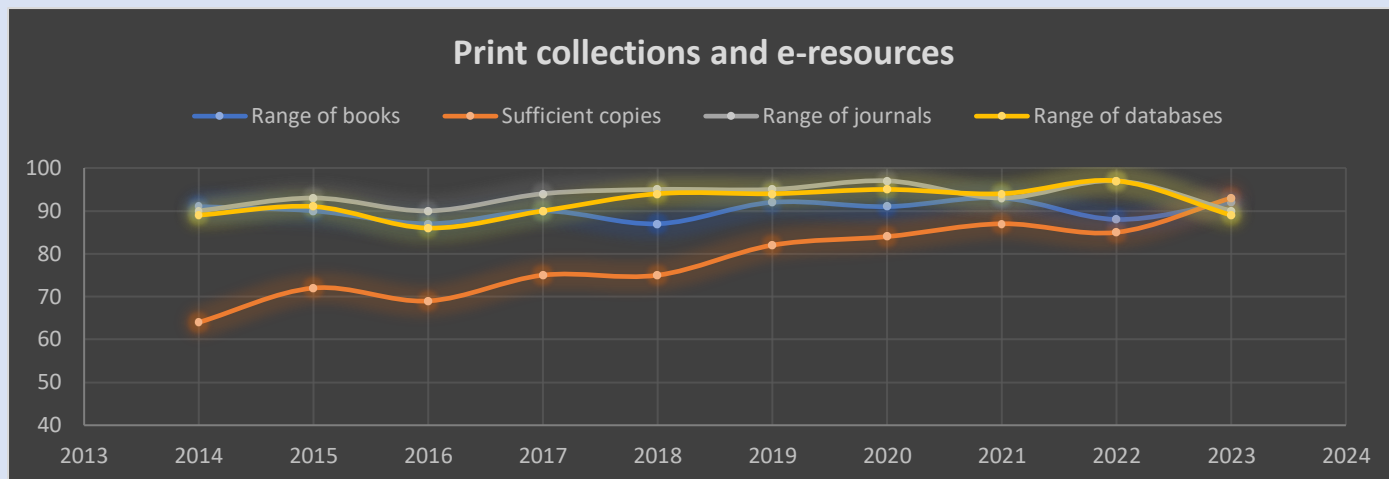
TO LEND, OR NOT TO LEND



The satisfaction rate (often or usually satisfied) for the range of print books was **92.3%** and for the range of print journals it was **90.3%**; for sufficiency of core LLM textbooks it was **92.9%**.

These questions relate to our core mission of providing a national legal research collection, and providing library and research support to the University of London's LLM cohort. High ratings here are a testament to the work of our Collection Development team and our liaison efforts with University of London teaching staff.

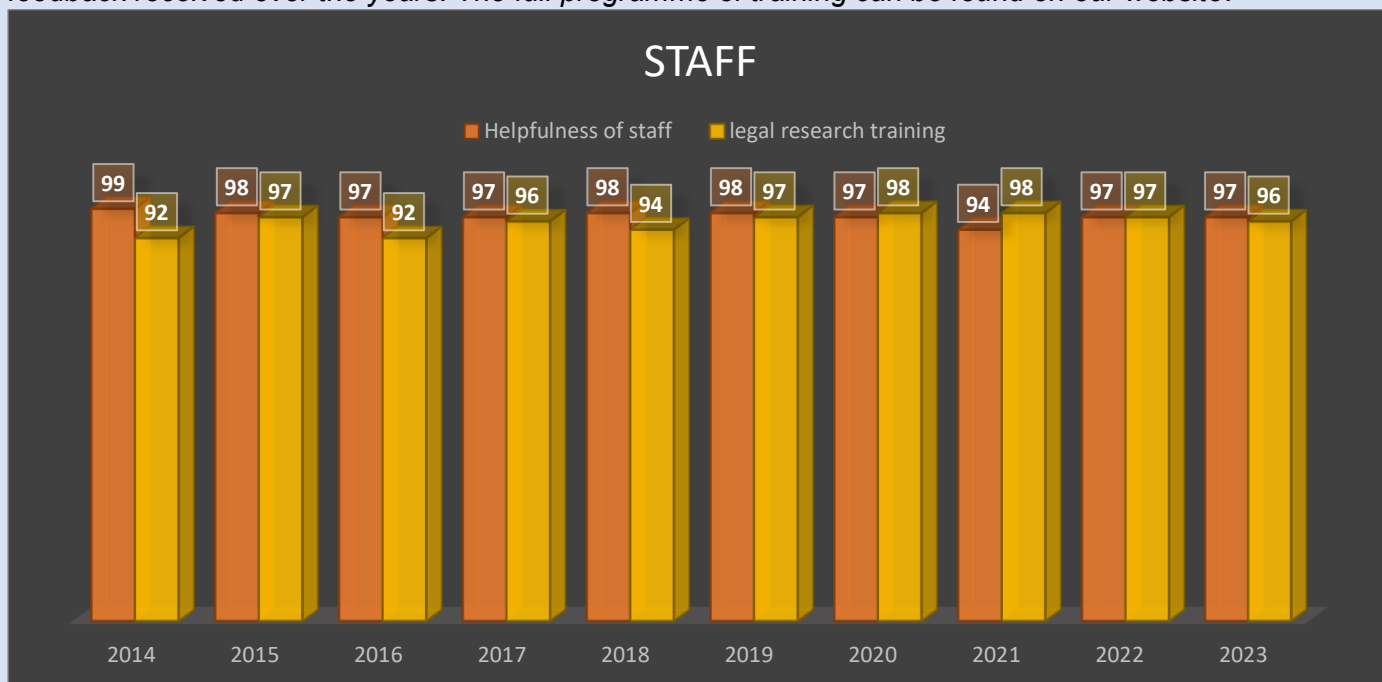
The satisfaction rate for the range of e-journals and databases was **88.7%** IALS Library subscribes to over 50 specialist legal research databases, the full list of which can be found on our website.



Training sessions and helpfulness of library staff

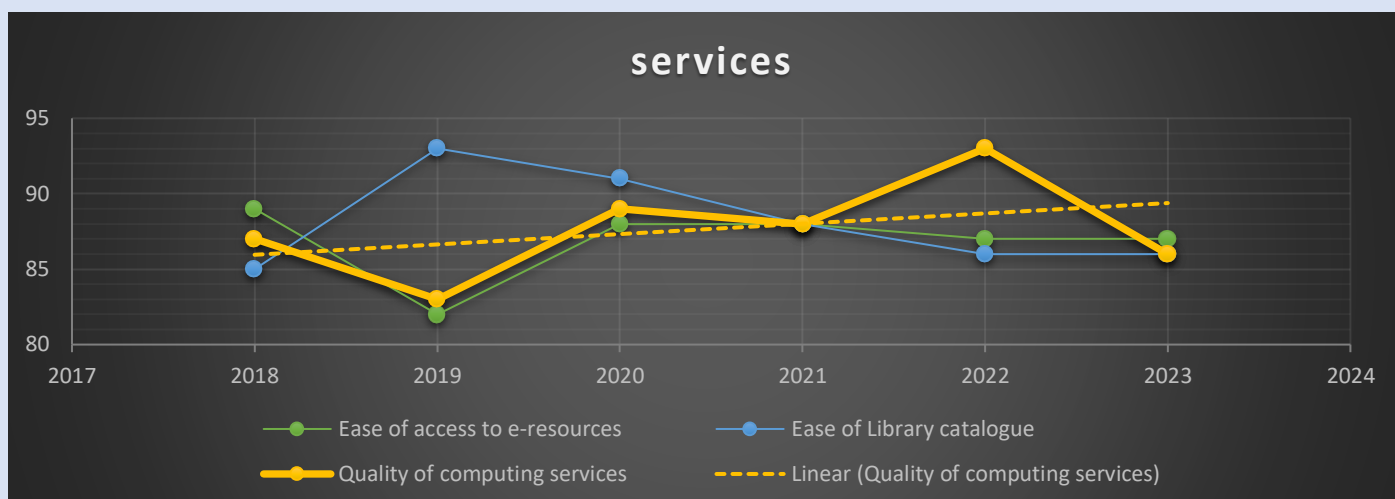
96.1% satisfaction rate for legal research training sessions *A consistently high scoring rating of which the staff are rightly proud.*

97% satisfaction rate for helpfulness of library staff *Our training sessions are developed based on the needs of our researchers and the strengths of our collection. This rating reflects the consistently high feedback received over the years. The full programme of training can be found on our website.*



IT and printing/copying

86.3% satisfaction rate for quality of IT services; **86.2%** for ease of use of the library catalogue and for ease of access to e-resources it was **86.7%**. *Our IALS Digital team oversee the maintenance and improvement of our computing services and facilities from frontline reader support to infrastructure and digital strategy.*

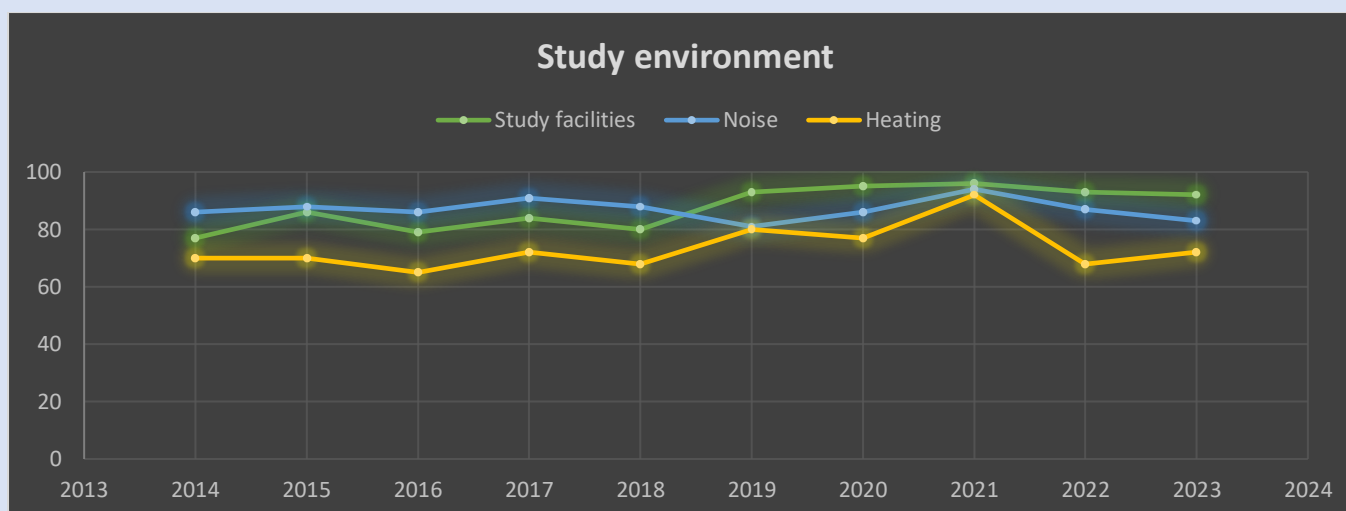


85.1% satisfaction rate for availability of computers; **87.5%** for availability of copiers/printers; **76.3%** for cost of photocopies/printing.

Study facilities and environment

92.4% satisfaction rate for study facilities; **94.3%** for availability of seating. *This is our first year seeking feedback about the availability of seating – we hope to use this information to ensure we maintain an appropriate mix of study space and research materials.*

82.6% satisfaction rate for noise in the study environment; **72.2%** for heating *We can see a clear improvement in overall satisfaction with our study environment post our transformation project. It is however disappointing that this hasn't extended to our rating for heating, as we continue to experience issues with the centrally controlled heating and cooling system within the reading rooms. Facilities Management are aware, and attempting to resolve.*



Opening hours

85.1% satisfaction rate for library opening times; **84.9%** for closing times.

Comments section

The comments section of the questionnaire provided the usual mix of compliments and suggestions. It can be read in the Appendix below. Library staff are already reacting to some of the suggestions, such as investigating if we can provide lockers for our readers, and upping our reading room patrols to ensure a silent study environment.

Conclusion

Another very solid year for the Library, despite the dissatisfaction with heating/ventilation system (which we hope to be reporting an improvement on next year). Individual negative comments relating to provision of materials in specific areas can be comfortably set against our consistently high (and improving) ratings pertaining to our print collections and e-resources, and a higher volume of complimentary remarks. It is reassuring to see that our core readers continue to rate and value us highly – all members of the IALS Library team will continue to work towards maintaining these excellent results, and to implement suggested improvements where practicable.

Laura Griffiths
Academic Services Manager
24th July 2023

Appendix 1 – selected list of comments

The nice ones

- A library worth travelling to.
- As always, I found everything I needed to complete my research
- Because I prefer the atmosphere here.

- By far the best UK study/research environment where I can concentrate and find all the materials I need. Staff are always helpful and friendly. Your Library improves the quality of my research.
- Calm and quiet study environment
- I have always appreciated the IALS Library for its stock of books and its lending arrangements, but above all the help given by staff willingly and with a pleasant demeanour.
- I spend many days at IALS working on assignments - it has the best study environment in my opinion, nice and quiet and great group study rooms!
- IALS Library actively provides excellent service.
- It's a first class library, with many resources and spaces for study and research.
- Lovely and peaceful.
- Perfect place for postgrad study
- Professional and very helpful staff
- Provides a comprehensive service for LLM students.
- quiet and uncrowded, plugs available at each desk.
- The depth of research materials promotes serious study.
- The Library continues to provide a high-quality environment for research and study. The availability of bookable meeting rooms is an asset.
- The professionalism displayed each time I am at the building to access materials not available remotely as well as the readiness of every member of staff is indeed top notch! What manner of professionalism (n)ever found elsewhere??
- The range of journals and books for research is excellent and the training sessions are very helpful.
- The range of research materials is absolutely amazing! The librarians are also very responsive. My requests for book purchases to support my studies have been reasonably well met.
- The staff are always very helpful and the library space is fantastic.
- The training sessions I have attended (available on zoom) have been excellent. Help to access the courses has also been excellent.
- The welcoming help of the staff!
- Very rich collections

The 'constructive' ones

- 1) Fix the heating problems. 2) Make lockers available for students. 3) Push opening time to 8am on weekdays.
- Allow members to borrow books for a longer period of time please.
- As a non-Londoner, a cloakroom/locker room would make my life a lot easier.
- Could open earlier.
- Fix Heating! More seating! Longer lending days!!
- I would like to have rooms to take (short) calls or meetings.
- If we could have a microwave and coffee machine or even hot water dispenser on the ground floor it would be a huge help.
- Increase lending time of books for LLM students
- More remote availability
- More water dispensers would be nice.
- Please fix the heating!!!
- Please make lockers available! Every day I must heave heavy materials to and fro which is difficult with my health conditions.
- Prayer room. Air conditioning for summer.
- Should be closing around midnight earliest.

- Tables are very short for people with lower back problems. For a more ergonomic reading environment, the Library should provide computer stands or longer tables.
- There should be greater support of the physically impaired.
- we need a coffee shop on the ground floor so I don't have to go out for coffee all the time.
- Why can we not bring in coffee?
- Would like the library to be open at 8am.
- You really must address the heating/cooling issues.

Certain factors raised here have already been addressed, or are being investigated:

- ✓ A dedicated, multi-faith quiet space has been made available on the ground floor of the IALS building and is already proving a popular resource.
- ✓ A carrell has been sound-proofed to allow private calls and meetings to be held.
- ✓ Our rules around beverages in the library have been slightly relaxed to allow for coffee (in sealed, reusable cups).
- We are investigating making lockers available to readers on the 2nd floor concourse
- Discussions are in place regarding the café on the ground floor.
- IALS Library is reviewing its assistive technology and equipment.

As noted above, the heating and cooling on the library remains an issue which we continue to investigate and seek to resolve. Requests for additional opening hours would incur additional funds not available to the IALS Library; and requests for longer loans can be comfortably offset against the majority of people preferring books in the library available for research.

Appendix 2: Full results of the survey:

The following full results of the survey contain responses across all reader categories to 19 specific questions all starting with the text: “Do you feel the Library generally meets your needs in terms of...”. By ticking category 3 or category 4 on the 4-point scale we have assumed that the respondents’ needs were either often satisfied (3) or usually satisfied (4). Note that not every responder answered every question.

Percentage and number of respondents who ticked category 3 (often satisfied) and category 4 (usually satisfied):

		2021		2022		2023	
Range of books?	LLM / other taught course students	94.4%	17	83.3%	10	92.8%	64
	Postgraduate research degree students	90.5%	19	66.7%	2	90.1%	48
	Academic / research staff	92.9%	13	94.4%	17	93%	40
	All reader categories (including others)	92.5%	49	88.3%	30	92.3%	155
Sufficient copies of core LLM textbooks?	LLM / other taught course students	77.8%	14	75%	9	95.5%	64
	Postgraduate research degree students	90.9%	10	100%	1	91.1%	41
	Academic / research staff	100%	9	92.3%	12	90%	27
	All reader categories (including others)	86.8%	33	84.6%	22	92.9%	132
Range of print journals?	LLM / other taught course students	83.3%	15	90.9%	10	92.4%	61
	Postgraduate research degree students	95.2%	20	100%	3	83%	44
	Academic / research staff	100%	14	100%	16	97.6%	41

	All reader categories (including others)	92.5%	53	96.8%	30	90.3%	148
Range of e-journals and databases?	LLM / other taught course students	88.9%	16	90.9%	10	86.4%	57
	Postgraduate research degree students	95%	19	100%	3	86.5%	45
	Academic / research staff	100%	14	100%	16	95%	38
	All reader categories (including others)	94.2%	52	96.8%	30	88.7%	141
Ease of access to e-resources?	LLM / other taught course students	83.3%	15	90.9%	10	84.4%	54
	Postgraduate research degree students	94.7%	18	33.3%	1	88.2%	45
	Academic / research staff	84.6%	11	100%	13	87.8%	36
	All reader categories (including others)	88%	50	86.7%	26	86.7%	137
Ease of use of library catalogue?	LLM / other taught course students	83.3%	15	72.7%	8	89.1%	57
	Postgraduate research degree students	89.5%	17	100%	3	82.7%	43
	Academic / research staff	84.6%	11	92.9%	13	87.8%	36
	All reader categories (including others)	86%	50	86.2%	25	86.2%	138
Quality of Computing facilities?	LLM / other taught course students	77.8%	14	100%	11	86.2%	56

	Postgraduate research degree students	88.9%	16	33.3%	1	86.8%	46
	Academic / research staff	100%	12	100%	13	87.8%	36
	All reader categories (including others)	87.5%	48	92.8%	26	86.3%	139
Availability of Seating?	LLM / other taught course students					93.8%	61
	Postgraduate research degree students					94.1%	48
	Academic / research staff					95%	38
	All reader categories (including others)					94.3%	149
Availability of PCs?	LLM / other taught course students	58.8%	10	100%	11	83.1%	54
	Postgraduate research degree students	70.6%	12	100%	3	85.7%	42
	Academic / research staff	100%	12	91.7%	11	86.8%	33
	All reader categories (including others)	76.1%	45	89.3%	25	85.1%	131
Availability of Printing/Copying?	LLM / other taught course students	75%	12	75%	9	87.3%	55
	Postgraduate research degree students	64.7%	11	100%	3	85.7%	42
	Academic / research staff	81.8%	9	91.7%	11	89.5%	34
	All reader categories (including others)	68.9%	44	85.8%	24	87.5%	133
Cost of photocopying and printing?	LLM / other taught course students	52.9%	9	58.3%	7	74.6%	47
	Postgraduate research degree students	58.8%	10	66.7%	2	70.8%	34
	Academic / research staff	81.8%	9	83.3%	10	84.2%	32

	All reader categories (including others)	57.4%	45	71.4%	20	76.3%	116
Helpfulness of library staff?	LLM / other taught course students	88.9%	17	92.3%	12	97.1%	66
	Postgraduate research degree students	85.7%	19	100%	3	94.4%	51
	Academic / research staff	100%	14	100%	17	100%	43
	All reader categories (including others)	94.4%	50	97.1%	33	97%	163
Legal research training sessions?	LLM / other taught course students	100%	18	100%	11	94.1%	63
	Postgraduate research degree students	95%	19	66.7%	2	98.1%	52
	Academic / research staff	100%	14	100%	13	97.2%	35
	All reader categories (including others)	98.1%	51	96.5%	27	96.1%	150
Study facilities?	LLM / other taught course students	88.9%	16	100%	11	88.1%	59
	Postgraduate research degree students	100%	20	100%	3	94.1%	48
	Academic / research staff	100%	11	86.7%	13	97.4%	38
	All reader categories (including others)	95.9%	47	93.3%	28	92.4%	146
Study environment – quietness?	LLM / other taught course students	83.3%	15	90.9%	10	82.1%	55
	Postgraduate research degree students	90%	18	66.7%	2	80.4%	41
	Academic / research staff	100%	12	86.7%	13	85.4%	35

	All reader categories (including others)	94%	47	86.7%	26	82.6%	133
Study environment – heating?	LLM / other taught course students	90%	16	58.3%	7	67.2%	45
	Postgraduate research degree students	80%	18	33.3%	1	65.4%	34
	Academic / research staff	100%	12	80%	12	87.8%	36
	All reader categories (including others)	92%	46	67.8%	21	72.2%	117
Opening times?	LLM / other taught course students	72.2%	13	76.9%	10	83.3%	55
	Postgraduate research degree students	95%	19	66.7%	2	78.8%	41
	Academic / research staff	92.3%	12	73.3%	11	95.1%	39
	All reader categories (including others)	88.2%	46	75%	24	85.1%	138
Closing times?	LLM / other taught course students	61.1%	11	69.2%	9	77.6%	52
	Postgraduate research degree student	95%	19	66.7%	2	90.2%	46
	Academic / research staff	92.3%	12	73.3%	11	92.3%	36
	All reader categories (including others)	82.4%	43	71.9%	23	84.9%	137
Overall, how satisfied?	LLM / other taught course students	94.4%	17	69.2%	9	98.6%	70
	Postgraduate research degree students	100%	21	100%	3	96.3%	53
	Academic / research staff	100%	14	94.5%	17	100%	43
	All reader categories (including others)	98.1%	52	85.7%	30	98.2%	169

		2021			2022			2023		
More materials available in the library or more lending?	LLM / other taught course students	In library	72.2%	13	In library	76.9%	10	In library	63.8%	44
		More lending	27.8%	5	More lending	23.1%	3	More lending	36.2%	25
	Postgraduate research degree students	In library	80.9%	17	In library	100%	3	In library	52.7%	29
		More lending	19.1%	4	More lending	0%	0	More lending	47.3%	26
	Academic/research staff	In library	71.4%	10	In library	61.1%	11	In library	72.1%	31
		More lending	28.6%	4	More lending	38.9%	7	More lending	27.9%	12
	All reader categories	In library	75.5%	40	In library	68.8%	24	In library	62.4%	106

Survey results year by year

2023 2022 2021 2020 2019 2018 2017

2016 2015 2014 2013 2012 2011 2010 2004 2003

Range of books?	92.3%	88.3%	92.5%	91.4%	91.9%	86.5%	89.7%	86.7%	89.7%	90.5%	91.9%	95.5%	93.2%	93.3%	91.75%	91.25%
Sufficient copies of LLM textbooks?	92.9%	84.6%	86.6%	83.7%	81.7%	74.8%	75.3%	68.9%	72.4%	63.6%	79.7%	82.1%	73.1%	73.3%	66.88%	65.19%
Range of journals?	90.3%	96.7%	92.5%	96.6%	95.4%	95.2%	94.2%	90.2%	92.6%	89.7%	87.2%	94.8%	93.7%	91.6%	91.00%	87.26%
Range of electronic journals and databases?	88.7%	96.8%	94.2%	94.7%	93.5%	94.4%	90.4%	86.1%	91.4%	89.1%	86.9%	94.7%	91.5%	89.4%	86.81%	80.95%
Access to e-resources	86.7%	86.7%	88%	88.4%	81.9%	88.7%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Ease of use of library catalogue?	86.2%	86.2%	86%	91.3%	92.5%	84.7%	81.9%	84.3%	85.9%	77.9%	86.4%	88.3%	90.1%	91.6%	89.53%	86.79%
Quality of computing facilities?	86.3%	92.8%	87.5%	88.9%	83%	86.7%	90.7%	88.9%	82.5%	78.9%	88.9%	86.6%	84.2%	94.8%	N/A	N/A
Availability of seating?	94.3%															
Availability of PCs?	85.1%	100%	77.8%	91.5%	86.7%	86.8%	87.9%	84%	79.5%	76.7%	82.7%	79.3%	72.7%	82.2%	43.46%	42.49%
Photocopiers/printers?	87.5%	89.3%	76.1%	86.6%	82.9%	84.7%	91.6%	85.6%	87.7%	83.4%	81.5%	78.1%	83.3%	86.1%	68.23%	51.63%
Printing? (obeselete)		85.5%	68.9%	83.9%	82.5%	79.5%	88.6%	81.3%	83.4%	76.3%	82.2%	80.1%	82.8%	82.9%	71.67%	46.66%
Cost of photocopying / printing?	76.3%	71.4%	57.4%	64.4%	62.9%	58.6%	61.2%	52.9%	56.3%	54%	55.8%	55.7%	56.2%	56.4%	29.57%	23.18%
Helpfulness of library staff?	97%	97.1%	94.4%	96.6%	98.2%	98%	97.2%	97.3%	98%	98.9%	97.7%	99.4%	98.7%	99.9%	97.33%	96.08%
Electronic training sessions?	96.1%	96.5%	98.1%	98%	97%	93.9%	96%	92.1%	97.1%	92.1%	93.5%	92.8%	90.8%	90.7%	82.27%	91.15%
Study facilities?	92.4%	93.3%	95.9%	95.1%	92.6%	80%	83.8%	78.6%	85.9%	76.7%	89.1%	87.6%	80.6%	88.7%	70.43%	76.92%