

Guerrilla Surveys

University for the Creative Arts
Library & Student Services

About the organization

Organisation: University for the Creative Arts
Department: Library & Student Services
Team: Gateway Services
Size of team
Industry Sector: Higher Education

About the University for the Creative Arts and Library & Student Services.

University for the Creative Arts (UCA) is a specialist university for creative arts subjects with a history dating back to Victorian times. It has four campuses at Canterbury, Epsom, Farnham and Rochester, with more than 6,000 students.

Library & Students Services (LSS) was created in August 2013 through the merger of two separate departments of Library & Learning Services and Student Development Services. The department was founded on the two principles of “*students first*” and “*Library as gateway*” with the overarching aim of delivering integrated and embedded support to students through a single and widely recognisable point on campus, the University Library.

Background

Following the launch on the new service in 2013-2014, LSS received feedback through a number of formal channels (such as School and Course Boards of Study as well as from an Equality Impact Assessment exercise) on its spaces and how could be improved to enhance the accessibility and visibility of the service. As a result of the feedback, LSS made a number of modifications to its spaces during the summer vacation ready for the start of new academic year.

Following the completion of the modifications, LSS decided to carry out a survey to obtain feedback on the spaces directly from its users as well as discovering what the priorities were for improving the way in which the spaces are used to serve our students and staff communities.

Purpose

The aim of the guerrilla survey was to proactively seek feedback from a wider range of our users about their first impressions of our spaces (e.g. did they find somewhere suitable to study) and ideas for simple space improvements.

What we did

We created our survey in Google Forms with seven short questions: Questions 1- 3 were contextual (e.g. Campus, Course, Year); Question 4 – 6 concerning the library environment and Question 7 to find out where the respondent would be interested in participating in a future focus group (*SEE APPENDIX A*). The survey took place over the course of a week in November, were Gateway Services staff approached library users asking them to complete the short survey on the i-Pad. This guerrilla method using Google Forms and i-Pads, enabled for a quick, inexpensive and effective way of conducting a survey with the aim of maximising the number of responses and engaging directly with users.

What it achieved

We collected feedback from 471 respondents, which represented approximately 7% of the student population, a sample which was significantly larger than usual formal feedback channels within the university (e.g. School Boards of Study) as well as any previous surveys carried out by LSS.

The survey has enabled us to identify what students thought was working well and where we could improve our spaces. We also gathered a large amount of qualitative information from our users about other library related issues and concerns they had such as opening hours as well as positive feedback on the helpfulness of staff.

Unexpectedly, because we used Google Forms and collated data live via i-Pads we were able to use date/time data captured for each survey response to see what time of day users struggled to find a suitable space to study in the University Library and why. Space was as a premium at busy times of the day, but we also discovered at different times noise also had an impact on whether a user felt they had found a suitable space to study.

What next?

In response to the top concerns/issues raised, each campus created an action plan with a set of priorities for enhancing of each of our local spaces. Each campus undertook a promotional campaign to demonstrate where and how we have responded to student feedback in this survey. The campaign was broadcasted via our Plasma screens and social media channels.

Further in-depth exploration of the top issues/concerns raised by students about our spaces will be carried out through student focus groups.

Library & Student Services will also be using the results and feedback from the survey to help support future business cases proposal for minor works or capital projects to enhance or develop our spaces further.

Future plans

Library & Student Service will be planning to conduct another guerrilla type survey which we will aim to conduct outside of the University Library space to capture students understanding of our services without visual cues of being in the space.

Library & Student Services' Snapshot Survey – Spaces

In response to your feedback last year about our spaces, we made a number of modifications over the summer. Our aim was to improve our spaces. We would now like to get your feedback on what you think about our University Library spaces, as well as asking you for any simple ideas you would like to suggest to help us to continue to improve.

**1. Are you studying at**

- Canterbury
- Epsom
- Farnham
- Rochester

2. Are you an

- FE Student
- HE Student

3. What year are you in?

- 1st Year
- 2nd Year
- 3rd Year
- 4th Year

4a. What are your first impressions of the Library space?

1 2 3 4 5

Poor Excellent

4b. Do you have any comments about why you chose this rating?**5a. Were you able to find a suitable place to study in the Library today**

- Yes
- No

Library & Student Services' Snapshot Survey – Spaces

5b. If your answer is 'No', why was this?

6. In order to continue improvements to our Library spaces, are there any simple ideas you think we could implement which would have a positive outcome for students and staff?

7. Would you be interested in being contacted by Library & Student Services (LSS) in the future to take part in a student focus group or other LSS feedback activity?

- Yes
- No
-

Name

Course

Contact Number

Email Address

Submit

Never submit passwords through Google Forms.

