Feedback Bubbles

Royal Holloway University of London
Library Services

About the organization

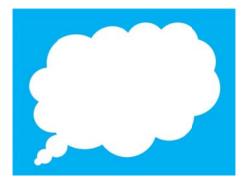**Organisation:**   Royal Hollow University of London
Department:
Team:
Industry Sector: Higher Education

The Library at Royal Holloway is committed to an on-going dialogue with its users, who provide invaluable feedback that helps to shape policy and the allocation of resources. Although feedback can be left at any time, during the 2013-14 academic year, it was decided that marketing efforts would be focused on a different area each month to ensure the maximum exposure of each issue in turn. These were branded as 'Library Loves…' months and December was designated as 'Library Loves Feedback'. The aim of the month was to capture as much feedback from users as possible across as many different mediums as possible.

December was chosen as the month to focus on collecting feedback for a number of reasons. Firstly, it allowed staff to digest and then react to feedback during the Christmas vacation. Solutions and answers could then be provided for the start of the Spring term. Secondly, it was felt that collecting feedback in advance of the NSS survey was a good way of providing students with a forum to raise issues and have these concerns answered/addressed prior to filling in their NSS returns. It was hoped that this would lead to fewer poor ratings on the information services questions within the NSS questionnaire. Finally, December was deemed to be far enough into the academic year for students to have experienced the services relevant to them at that time, but early enough in the academic year that concerns could be addressed and the solution be of benefit to current students.

The feedback bubbles were used as part of a larger feedback campaign, which included online tools (Padlet) as well as the regular feedback channels open to students.

For the feedback bubbles part of the campaign, display boards were set up in the foyer of the Bedford Library – the location with the highest footfall across the libraries on campus – and small 'feedback bubbles' in a range of colours (to attract attention) were attached to the board with additional forms left on a table by the boards along with a few pens. A few example bubbles were also pinned to the board to encourage students to participate (once genuine feedback began to come in, these were removed).

Students were asked to fill in any feedback or comments for the Library and pin the feedback bubble to the board. The board was positioned away from the Library helpdesk and monitored only to make sure that inappropriate messages were removed.

The bubbles approach attracted a lot of attention and over the two weeks that the board was present in the Library, 52 pieces of feedback were collected. These were recorded and grouped into different areas of concern, which showed that the large majority related to issues around the Library building itself.
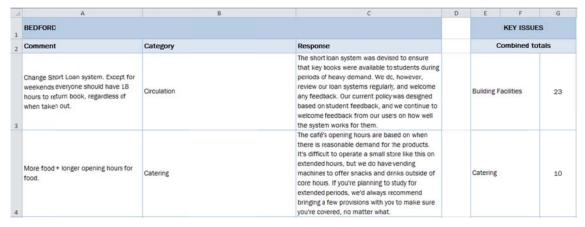
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	BEDFORD				KEY ISSUES		
2	Comment	Category	Response		Combined totals		
3	Change Short Loan system. Except for weekends everyone should have 18 hours to return book, regardless of when taken out.	Circulation	The short loan system was devised to ensure that key books were available to students during periods of heavy demand. We do, however, review our loan systems regularly, and welcome any feedback. Our current policy was designed based on student feedback, and we continue to welcome feedback from our users on how well the system works for them.		Building Facilities		23
4	More food + longer opening hours for food.	Catering	The café's opening hours are based on when there is reasonable demand for the products. It's difficult to operate a small store like this on extended hours, but we do have vending machines to offer snacks and drinks outside of core hours. If you're planning to study for extended periods, we'd always recommend bringing a few provisions with you to make sure you're covered, no matter what.		Catering		10

Figure 2 – Feedback Bubble Data in a spread sheet

Over the Christmas vacation responses were collected from the appropriate member of Library staff and these were pinned to the feedback board for when the students returned for the Spring term.

Solutions to issues were also found, wherever possible. The feedback bubbles proved one of the most successful forms of gathering user feedback, and were commended by several departments (via staff-student committees, which Library representatives attend) as a good way of collecting feedback. Some departments even ran a similar campaign in their own buildings. There did not, however, appear to be any significant impact on NSS scores.

Related materials:

- an example of a blank feedback bubble,
- an example of a response to feedback,
- full list of transcribed feedback bubbles receive