National Libraries Day Event

Library Services- University of Roehampton

About the organization

Organisation: University of Roehampton

Department: Library Services

Size: 60 employees

Industry Sector: Higher Education

The University of Roehampton is a campus university offering a wide range of study programmes for circa 9,000 students. Roehampton is currently ranked the best modern university in London according to all three major UK league tables - the Complete University Guide 2016, the Sunday Times Good University Guide 2016 and the Guardian University Guide 2016. Roehampton also has an excellent research profile and we are ranked as the most research-intensive modern university in the country

Library Services is based within a single building at the centre of the main Digby campus. We have a new Library being built which should be finished and open in 2017. Along with core academic library services we also have an Academic Liaison team (subject librarians) onsite who provide academic and information skills support, the Academic Learning Services team who help develop students' academic and learning skills, the IT Department, Media Services and the Collections Development team. The Employability department is also based within the Library.

Background Feedback Information

The University of Roehampton Library tries to be pro-active in encouraging its users to give feedback about Library resources and services to help drive improvements and better their Library experience. Feedback is collected in a variety of ways: Virtual librarian live-instant chat, online feedback form, comment cards, email, feedback boards, in person, via the phone, focus groups and social media – Twitter/Facebook

The National Libraries Day Event

As part of the build up to National Libraries Day the Library Services Marketing Group decided to run a fun exercise in February 2015 to engage with our students about their view of Libraries, in particular our own here at Roehampton. This was an exercise managed by Library managers and supported by our Learning Advisers and Subject Librarians. The number of feedback slips we received each day was very positive and we collected 271 pieces of feedback across the week. We located the activity on the ground floor of the Library to capture as much feedback and passing interest as possible.

Methodology

The design of the feedback slips included a smiley and a sad face, lending itself to the opportunity for our users to leave positive or negative feedback, when asked the question, 'Please tell us your thoughts about the University of Roehampton Library'. In addition we wanted to focus on what our current students felt might be improved in the Library and asked the question, 'Please tell us what you'd really like to see more of in your University Library'.

The comments board was quickly turned into a focus for collecting the feedback and the Subject Librarians and Learning Advisers were timetabled for slots across lunchtimes to engage with our users and encourage people to feedback.

We advertised on our social media platforms (Twitter, Facebook) and spoke to our users as they passed by the designated area.
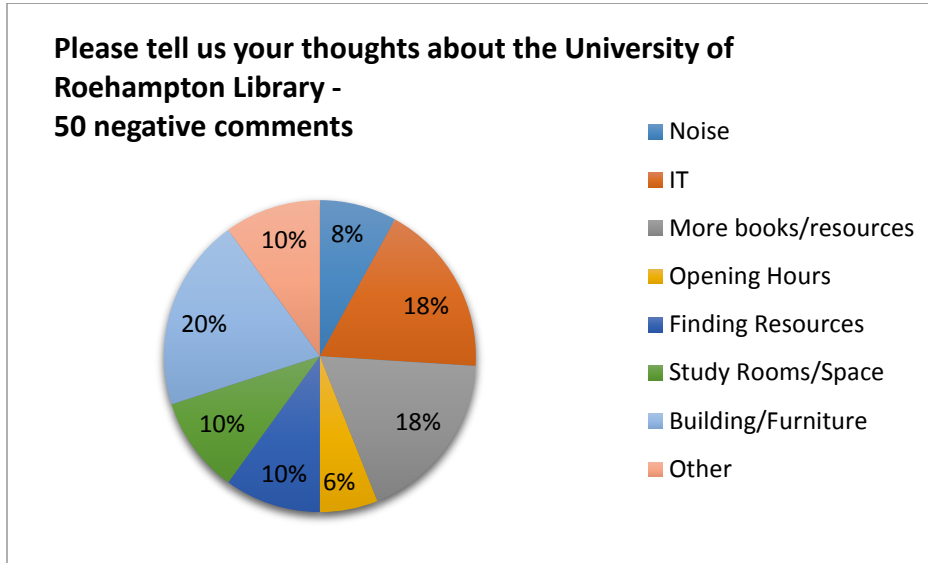
The campaign ran for 1 week leading up to the actual day of Saturday 7th February.

Feedback Results

In one week we collected 271 pieces of feedback.

Please tell us your thoughts about the University of Roehampton Library (169 comments):

Negative Comments

The more negative responses represent 30% of the feedback received under this question. Building/furniture and more books/resources and IT come out almost on a level as the top three things the students that responded have negative comments about. Following that, Study Rooms/Space, finding resources and other come out equally in terms of the numbers of negative comments received.
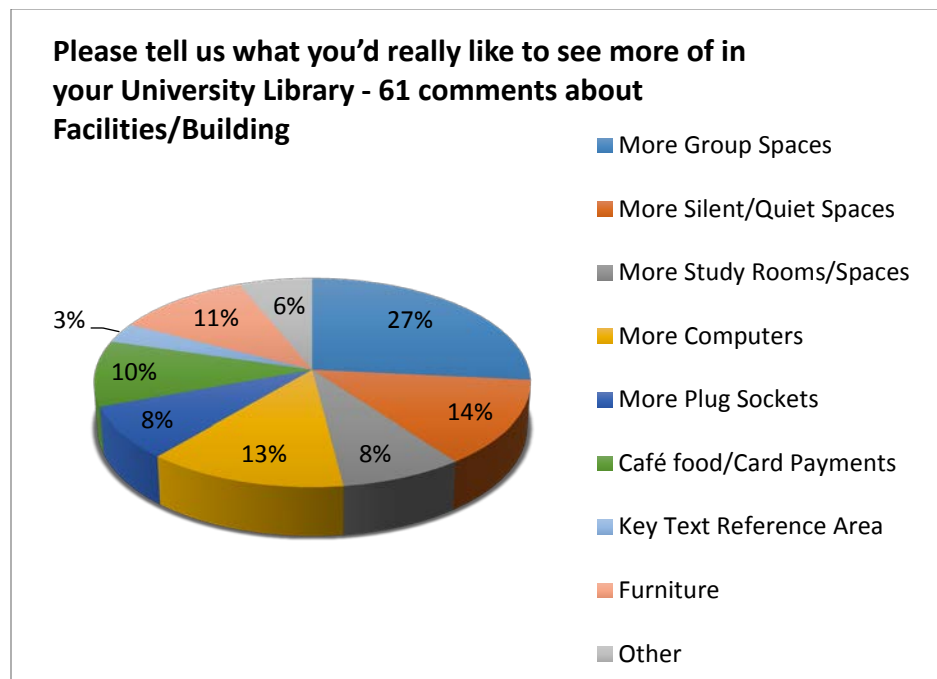
Positive Comments
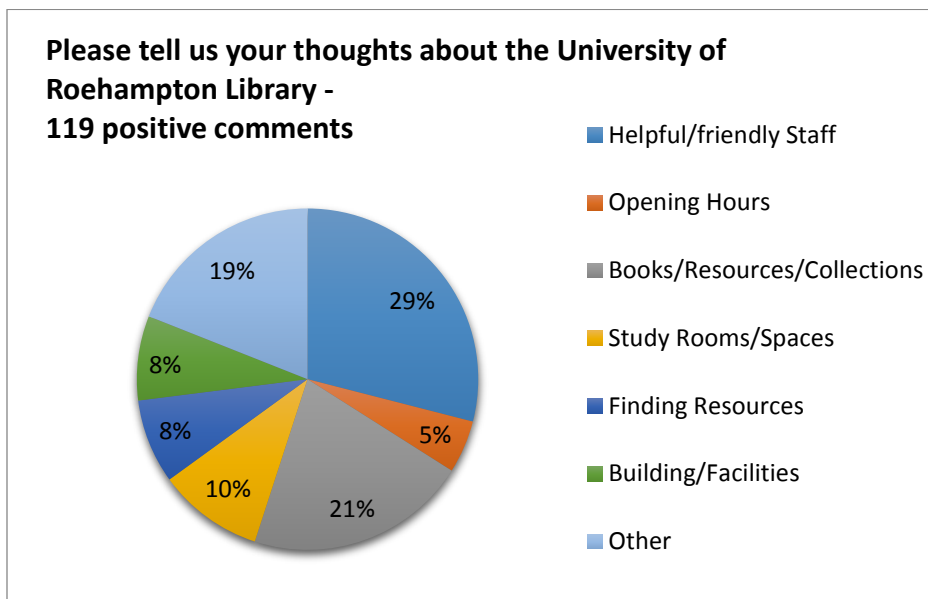
The positive comments received in response to this question form 70% of the responses. Significantly, of the positive comments received, 29% of those were in relation to the Library staff being friendly and helpful, which is very positive. Following on from that in contrast to some of the less positive comments 21% of the responses were positively praising the collections and resources. It's also encouraging to see that the change in the opening hours to include extended and 24 hour opening is starting to see some positive comments.
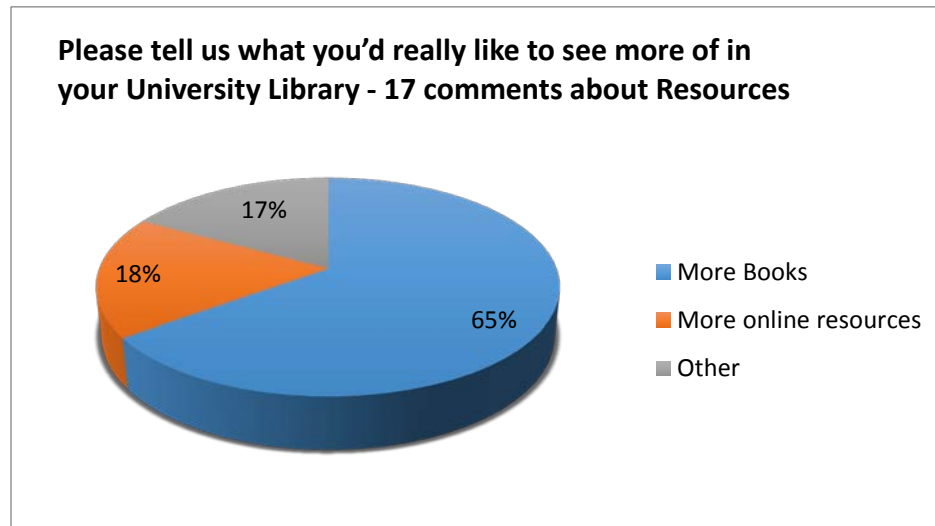
Please tell us what you'd really like to see more of in your University Library (102 comments):

Facilities/Building

Please tell us what you'd really like to see more of in your University Library - 61 comments about Facilities/Building

- ■ More Group Spaces
- ■ More Silent/Quiet Spaces
- ■ More Study Rooms/Spaces
- ■ More Computers
- ■ More Plug Sockets
- ■ Café food/Card Payments
- ■ Key Text Reference Area
- ■ Furniture
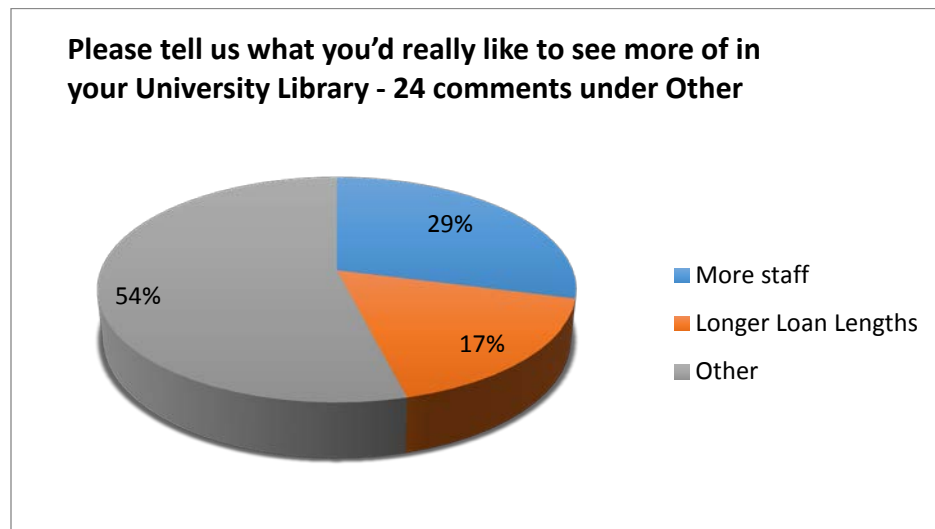- ■ Other

27%, 14%, 8%, 13%, 8%, 10%, 3%, 11%, 6%

Responses to the question regarding what people would like to see more of in the University Library were split quite clearly into three categories. Comments regarding the Facilities and Resources gained 60% of the responses. This includes requests for more study spaces, for group study and more silent study spaces. More computers, more plug sockets and comments about furniture also feature within this category. From these comments, it is not surprising as the University is investing significantly in developing a new Library building. The current building is not purpose built and space has been squeezed in some areas over the years. As a positive move these are criticisms that we're aware of and are trying to put some investment into at this Library ahead of the new building. Comments received have been used in a business case for the capital bid for development of the current building.

Resources

Please tell us what you'd really like to see more of in your University Library - 17 comments about Resources

- More Books — 65%
- More online resources — 18%
- Other — 17%

Only 17% of the responses received were around needing more resources, which can be viewed positively. There are still a fraction of users that gave responses that believe we still don't have enough books and a smaller group who would like more investment in online resources. In terms of countering this argument I think we could put things in place to encourage users to communicate their thoughts about what we need to buy more of. We may need to manage expectations but I think we might be able to fulfil requests quite frequently given the way we use the budget.

Other

Please tell us what you'd really like to see more of in your University Library - 24 comments under Other

- More staff — 29%
- Longer Loan Lengths — 17%
- Other — 54%

23% of the comments received in this question are categorised under 'other' as they are a mix of responses. However, there are some comments related to needing more staff and longer loan lengths that are also highlighted in this section.

Conclusion and evaluation

When analysing the results it was reassuring to note that there weren't any really big surprises in the feedback that we received. It was also very encouraging to see that the positive comments received outweighed the negative comments, with a particular focus on the helpful/friendly staff.

The feedback did highlight a need for some development within the current building, especially as those providing feedback in this instance won't reap the benefits of a new Library. A capital bid for new furniture and building developments was placed as a result of this feedback and some funding was provided.

We were also mindful that there should be some recognition of the potential that the students studying in this Library in the next few years may be inclined to be more disenfranchised as they see and experience the developments of the campus around them but may not see any results for themselves.

Working on and the implementation of some further developments to services or facilities over the next couple of years ahead of the new Library might help towards a more positive experience for those using the current Library. For example, developing a simple resource request scheme might also help us to overcome some perceptions of not having enough copies of texts.

Changes were implemented and we provided feedback to our users by creating a display board in our main foyer on the ground floor titled: '' *You asked, we listened''* and listed the changes made as a result of their valued feedback. Some changes made to date are: increased plug sockets and USB charging areas, increased social study space, we feedback the number of new books provided that year, we told them how many new Key text items had been ordered and made the collection loanable, provision of an additional 60 study seats .

Overall, the event went well and we had some great feedback that helped us make changes here in the Library. It was also good to feedback what had changed as a result of what our users were saying so we can 'prove' that we are listening and care.