

The library information needs of Bournemouth University students

**A report for Academic Services, Bournemouth
University**

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The library information needs of Bournemouth University students: taught programmes

1. Background

Bournemouth University Library commissioned a study to investigate the needs of the university community. Already completed is a discussion with the Bournemouth University research community (Constable, 2007) which was informed by a national study of the use of academic libraries by researchers (Research Information Network, 2007).

This report focuses on the perceived future needs of students on taught programmes and was informed by a literature review of academic library services and student learning. The key issues for this study were identified as: Information-seeking behaviour; E-resources; Communication; New technologies; Learning space; Future role for academic libraries.

1.1. Strategic vision

The vision for Academic Services is to become a University Centre of Professional Excellence in support of Bournemouth University's learning and research environments by 2012 (*Academic Services Strategic Vision 2007/8 – 2011/12*, 2007). Academic Services has a reputation for innovation and excellence including the provision of e-resources and Peer Assisted Learning and core elements of the vision are: leading students' academic skills development; supporting student-centred e-learning; providing library resources and information tools to support the education and research communities.

A key development in the provision of excellence has been the new Sir Michael Cobham Library which was winner of the SCONUL Library Design Award 2007. This recognised Bournemouth University's commitment to its academic community in providing a flexible and responsive space to meet the current and future demands of a growing academic community.

1.2. Key issues

1.2.1. Information-seeking behaviour

The current generation of students have been surrounded by digital technology and there is a range of titles describing young people: Net Generation, Google Generation, Digital Natives and Millennials. These terms presuppose digital knowledge and a high level of confidence with finding information on the internet and using electronic sources. Another group is the Digital Immigrants, who grew up in the pre-Digital age and have different expectations and experiences (Ball et al., 2007). Whilst it is possible to stereotype the information seeking behaviour and learning styles of both groups it is also recognised that we are all increasingly the Google Generation and developing scan, flick and power browsing style, with generational differences rapidly being eroded as more people across all age groups are using the internet and Web 2.0 technologies (CIBER, 2008).

It is observed that current undergraduate students are looking for a convenient, timesaving and fast response and as they move from using physical collections to the digital library, they risk being overwhelmed (Lukasiewicz, 2007). They want systems

that are simple and easy to use with search engines providing a better fit for college students' lifestyles (CIBER, 2008).

Libraries provide a wide-range of e-content and it is recognised that they need to have a better understanding of the communities they serve, as well as needing to change the profile of their services. Currently, students, when asked about libraries, focus their responses on print resources, almost to the exclusion of the, now heavily used, electronic resources (CIBER, 2008).

In this internet-dominated, information-rich culture, information literacy skills have been undervalued. There is a mass of user-created content and collaborative work, with students having instant access to information of varying quality but spending little time in evaluation (CIBER, 2008). The skills of critical thinking, research, and evaluation are increasingly required to make sense of the world (New Media Consortium/Educause, 2007). These academic information literacy skills, once acquired, have the potential to increase the quality of student learning and future opportunities.

1.2.2. e-Resources

A small survey of students, in 2003, highlighted some reasons why students may not have used e-books, with the main reason being that they are "hard to read and browse" (Chu, 2003). A larger, more recent student survey at University College London reported on a growing interest in e-books and a greater diversity of resource-discovery behaviour amongst students (Rowlands, 2007). This trend is further supported by Ball et al. (2007) who notes firstly that students' use of e-books is increasing but tending to be granular and selective and secondly, that students are ignoring hard copy in favour of electronic alternatives from whatever source.

1.2.3. Communication

A number of recent reports have also reviewed an increase in the use of a range of communication styles. Students use online chat regularly and there is an opportunity for libraries to provide real-time reference and information skills support (Lukasiewicz 2007). The OCLC Report (2007) notes a rapid rise in the use of blogs and this is supported by Maxymuk (2007) who notes the prevalence of blogs on library sites, as well as describing the potential of wikis to disseminate information to library users. A number of recent reports note that library and academic involvement in students' social networking sites, such as Facebook and MySpace, may not be popular as this may be seen by students as an invasion of their privacy (Ipsos MORI, 2007; OCLC, 2007; Joly, 2007). However, it is also suggested that libraries should keep a watching brief as there is evidence of education-related uses which may then lead to greater opportunity for libraries. There may also be an opportunity to emulate the style of these social networking sites, for example using an organisational Virtual Learning Environment (CIBER, 2008).

1.2.4. New technologies

There is a range of new enabling technologies currently in use by students for both personal communication and learning. Library users switch between search engines, social networking sites, wikis and electronic services to scan, flick and power browse (CIBER, 2008). Most students have a mobile phone and increasingly, with the new generation of smart phones, they are "becoming the gateway to our digital lives [and] the time is approaching when these little devices will be as much a part of education as a bookbag" (New Media Consortium/Educause, 2007). Edirisingha et al. (2007) observe that podcasts can provide structure and be an organizational tool for online learners.

A study (Ipsos MORI, 2007) of 16-18 year olds who were intent on going to university reported that ICT was seen as part of the fabric of their lives and observed that for these students ICT was seen as “fading into the foreground” but, conversely, they also expected that technology should not be used for its own sake and would expect there to be an educational benefit.

1.2.5. Learning space

The way in which library spaces are being used has been changing over the past five years. The pace of this change is increasing as technology progresses and is being influenced by new learning technologies and the growth in student-centred and collaborative learning (JISC, 2006). Hunter (2006) concludes that the real success stories have been where both the operational and pedagogical drivers have been the critical factors in designing, developing and implementing innovative learning and teaching spaces.

The University has embraced this philosophy as the citation on winning the SCONUL library design award confirms:

"Bournemouth's Library and Learning Centre has a thoughtful, quiet and subtle approach to library design and has become a beacon for scholarship in the city, so is a deserving winner. The most successful libraries are those who have worked closely with their institution and used the new library to bring about innovation in library service delivery." (Cannell, 2007)

The need for more change is recognised as an ongoing challenge by the Bournemouth University Librarian:

“The ability to succeed is the ability to adapt. It’s about embracing and leading change. We must create an active, learning environment not only by maximising space but also by ensuring it is sympathetic to the developing pedagogies and students’ expectations.” (Ball, 2007)

1.2.6. Future role for academic libraries

The CIBER Report (2008) researches the digital information seeking behaviour of the Google generation (born post 1993) and their use of virtual libraries, concluding that digital literacy does not equal information literacy. The e-Space study (JISC, 2006) discussed the challenges of change management in an environment where there is increasing emphasis on learner independence with the need for library staff to provide more facilitation, support and guidance. It was also highlighted that Library staff need to gain a better understanding of pedagogical skills in order to deliver their evolving support role. The concept of the learning centre is still evolving and as learning will involve many different activities, each having different behaviours associated with it, the learning centre will need to be the most multifunctional of spaces.

2. Methodology

The aim of the study was to gain a better understanding of the views of the current Bournemouth University taught student community and identify how the library service could develop in the future. Student focus groups were identified as the most appropriate methodology with the results of this study influencing the future development of library services.

Three members of the Library Redesigning Services Working Group, Jill Beard, Judith Hewins and Stella Welsh, reviewed the literature and identified the rationale for the

focus groups (see Appendix 1). The students were recruited using the Student Ambassador Scheme with a £10 Book Voucher as an incentive.

Two focus groups were held with 11 students attending and were facilitated by Linda Constable, with attendance by members of the Library Group who acted as scribes. The summary notes of each focus group were also emailed to further members of the Student Ambassador Scheme who had expressed an interest but were unable to attend and one additional response was received (see Appendix 2 and Appendix 3).

3. Results

3.1 Information-seeking behaviour

The information seeking behaviour of undergraduate students is subject to much debate, with most studies reporting that these students want the answer as quickly as possible and with Google as the predominant search vehicle.

All of the Bournemouth University students had changed the way in which they searched for information as they progressed through their studies. Google was the initial search tool and in the first year some students considered anything relevant with others using key words from the assignment details. Availability and immediacy were the key factors. The students then progressed to using other search tools. This included the Library catalogue and mySearch which uses federated search technology to search across multiple e-resources in a single transaction. Bournemouth University Virtual Learning Environment, myBU, was used for access to e-resources including e-journals, reading lists and scanned chapters, as well as PRISM, the Library catalogue, for locating resources, including the printed collection. One student in particular highlighted the range of relevant websites and resources that could be directly accessed using Bournemouth University Athens authenticated logon. The students continued to become more selective and to improve their evaluation skills by looking for quality not quantity, especially where the assignment word count was a key factor.

The speed of using the internet and easy access to e-journals was highlighted as providing a quick way of providing the students with relevant information, as compared with using a printed book which required a laborious search through the index followed by finding the reference on the relevant page.

Most of the students wanted more access to e-resources although many found this difficult, especially at the start of the course. It was suggested that anything that could be done to simplify access would improve student e-resource discovery and that Course Handbooks should all include e-resources.

Journals, both electronic and printed, were identified as being daunting to use and evaluate with students needing guidance on the different types of journals, for example scholarly peer-reviewed, trade and table top. Most students developed confidence and skills in using e-journals, including improved key word searching both in speed and specificity. Overall, there was a clear preference for e-journals over printed journals with one of the reasons being less photocopying.

It was identified that using the Library catalogue to search for e-books was more difficult than with printed books. There was also a request for key text books (printed) to be made more available in the library in numbers that might satisfy course demand. However, it was also noted that many students referenced the same book. There was also further discussion about providing key texts as e-books or scanned book chapters. This would make them more cheaply available to students than their printed equivalent as well as providing additional search options such as power browsing.

The students explored a range of information literacy support options, with their course ethos or personal preferences influencing their preferred style. Most students indicated that they would probably learn more by doing and finding out for themselves but recognised that it needed to be in a supported environment.

There was also a discussion about the age of the student perhaps influencing their behaviour. This followed a suggestion (from the younger students present) that younger students would probably be more likely to ask the Subject Librarian for help with electronic resources and that older students may tend to prefer to use printed books. However, this was not necessarily supported by the individual responses in the focus groups which included students in their 20s, 30s and 40s.

Personal and individual help was seen as a key and lasting requirement with Subject Librarians supporting access to resources. Most of the students were aware of their Subject Librarian with some requesting more contact time. However, a small number of students had not had any contact in their first year and one student was not aware of the service. Information skills support was identified as a key service in assisting students in finding relevant resources to support their learning and complete their assignments. It was commented that information skills sessions should be an ongoing programme and not just be delivered at the start of a course. The timing and frequency of an information literacy programme was seen as critical. The sessions should also include practical exercises, both as an additional learning element and for revision purposes, and time for questions.

Those students that had attended the Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) information skills training found the small group beneficial as it was easier to ask questions. The Peer Assisted Learning Leader was also identified as providing a useful source of help and support.

Course lecturers provide advice on resource gathering with students being strongly influenced by the views of the individual lecturer marking their assignment. Lecturers were varied in their approach to signposting relevant resources. Some lecturers specified a range of key texts that students should purchase, which were then not necessarily found to be as relevant as the students had expected. Further advice included providing reference criteria in terms of a specific number of websites, books and journals to encourage students to use a wide range of resources; providing scanned chapters from key texts through myBU; directing students towards theories from "this guy"; emailing relevant articles. However, the students then continued to develop their own ways of working whilst remaining within the assignment assessment criteria.

3.2 E-Resources

E-resource provision is increasing at Bournemouth University and this is matched by an exponential increase in the use of e-resources.

Students' use of print and electronic resources is changing with a difference between journals and books: a distinct preference for e-journals over printed journals; a first preference for printed books over e-books.

However, overall, there was an increasing preference for electronic resources, not necessarily just the first choice e-journals, which facilitate information searching using the edit and find functions. At the start of their course most of the students had not used e-journals but soon found them essential to their studies and, once confident in accessing and using them they discovered the benefits: quicker and easy to find; more

current information; less photocopying; remote access, mobility and “can read anywhere in the world”.

The main barrier to using e-books would appear to be confidence as there was a perception that e-books were harder to access and use than their print equivalent. This was also related to the way in which students had accessed information at school or college with most having used printed books for A Level. Students still valued the printed ‘book experience: portability ‘as you can take it anywhere’; more readable as reading the printed page is easier than using a computer screen for reading large amounts of text. However, one student observed that “my 13 year old brother uses e-books the same as I use e-journals”. One way in which students were more confident in their use of e-books was through scanned chapters provided by lecturers, as this is similar to using an e-journal. This also highlighted the improved functionality of e-books with the availability of editing tools.

The students recognised that e-books had untapped potential and identified future developments that would improve their accessibility and increase their use. This included a reader (a device that would allow reading without the feeling of using a computer screen); content accessibility including greater availability of scanned chapters; and a browsing function. Any tool that could help with correct referencing was thought to be an advantage, for example e-books generating a reference on the fly. It was also suggested that Subject Librarians’ Information Literacy Sessions should provide more practical guidance on accessing and using e-books. The PAL Leader packs could also provide support and guidance on e-books.

The development and use of virtual services were explored and the students all said that they needed more help with information searching. This was needed at varying levels, and, particularly, at the time of need. This could be made available from myBU and the suggestions were for email or online chat, more Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), more screenshots, an Amazon style related search facility and a ranked list of resources. The students would also prefer a single logon with seamless access to resources.

3.3 Communication

Most students access instant communication technology and use their personal laptop for study and social communication –“I turn on my computer then msn, email and Facebook”.

The discussions highlighted a preference for e-mail communication, as it provided a referral record. However, there was discussion concerning the dual system of personal and University email addresses. In the group there was no consensus about which email address was preferred for University contact, including library communication. However, there was an expressed wish for a simple, forwarding function from university to personal if required, and, if possible, for filtering options to be included.

Instant messaging or chat was also thought to have potential for immediate and personalised communication, support and guidance but it was observed that it would need to be in a prominent position on the Library website or within myBU.

The students were more cautious in being contacted using personal mobile phones and definitely did not want to receive unsolicited email texts, although some were happy to be contacted regarding overdue books.

The students all stressed the importance of receiving support at the time of need: 24x7, remotely, online and on library and departmental computers.

3.4 New technologies

There are a range of new technologies that students use, some of which are already in use in a learning context and others that are currently only used in a personal and social context. Most students have their own mobile phone and MP3 players. Most regularly communicate using online chat and social networks, particularly Facebook.

Although all the students had mobile phones it was acknowledged that some students may not be able to afford them or have limited contracts. Some lecturers currently use text messages to let students know of lecture cancellations as well as sending a message to students' myBU account. Some students also suggested using text messages for an overdue alert.

Although most students were aware of blogs not all had used them. Some of the Media School students had to create a blog as part of their course. Most of the students were not aware of the recently introduced Library Blogs and considered that a Subject Librarian's Blog could be useful if it were publicised, current and relevant. It would also be useful to have an alert system and it was acknowledged that an RSS newsfeed could provide this service.

Some of the students had used podcasts and some lectures were available as podcasts. Podcasts were perceived as a positive addition because they supported different learning styles, provided a revision tool and were useful for distance and lifelong learners. However, there was some concern from the students that it could be viewed as a replacement for attending the lecture.

The students were less knowledgeable about wikis although most had heard of Wikipedia. Some lecturers used wikis in a light-hearted way and others actively discouraged their use, especially Wikipedia. Most students were aware of the need to evaluate the authority of the information in a wiki.

Social networks, in particular Facebook, were being used by both lecturers and students. Facebook is currently the most popular social network with students. Some university departments have groups on Facebook and students have the option to participate or not. The students used Facebook to post dissertation ideas, discussion and survey responses. However, there was a note of caution from an older student, who did not use such networks, and a student working with school age children, who was concerned about personal intrusion.

The students recognised the value of myBU in supporting their studies and observed that it had greatly improved over the last year. Further ways of adding value to the service were suggested including access to more e-resources from myBU, course presentation notes, myBU Forum and my BU Discussion.

3.5 Learning space

The Library is seen as a learning space offering a range of individual and group learning environments with the staff and technology to support students' learning and information needs. It is also seen as a centrally located space for meeting and collaborating with others.

The students identified a continuing need for a flexible, adaptable space with a mix of group discussion, quiet and silent areas. The furniture should be comfortable and moveable enabling students to re-arrange it to suit their different needs. The quiet and silent areas also need adjacent space for break-out or social discussion areas. All of the areas need to be wireless enabled with facilities for group presentations and group collaboration as well as individual study. A high quality video conference facility for

national and international research and collaboration was identified as a useful facility for postgraduate programmes.

Most of the students had laptops but these were more frequently used off-campus with the students continuing to use computers in the library or academic departments and they expressed a preference for a library computer booking system with bookable and non-bookable computers. There was also a request for Course and School-specific software programmes to be made available from library computers or personal laptops. The students commented that there would always be a demand for fixed computers. However, some of the students volunteered that in the future the use of smaller handheld devices, which are more portable than laptops, might accelerate changes to library computer usage.

3.6 Future role of academic libraries

It was observed that in the future students would expect and demand instant electronic communication. However, these students were equally clear that there would still be a need for library staff to offer personalised guidance and support in locating information and resources to support their learning. There would be an expectation for more 24x7 virtual services which are more intuitive and provide more personalised online support. Library staff would provide and generate some of the interaction and deliver the 'library' experience by providing new services such as online chat and co-browsing. "The library is more than just a place where knowledge is held [and] there'll always be a need for libraries and someone to talk to."

4. Conclusions

The literature suggests that students want a quick, convenient response and identify Google as the main information search tool. The Bournemouth University students display the same information seeking characteristics in terms of speed and convenience, with Google being the predominant search tool. However, this group of students had developed a wide range of information-seeking strategies using a variety of search tools. The availability and functionality of recent new services, such as myBU and mySearch, is influencing students' information searching behaviours.

Personal support and guidance are identified as key elements in successful relevant and high-quality resource discovery. The students recognise that they need more information literacy support. However, they stress the need for this expert guidance and support to be delivered through timely, well-planned and personalised information literacy programmes which could be delivered in individual or group sessions and using face-to-face or virtual environments.

Students are guided by their lecturers and Subject Librarians need to continue to work collaboratively with both lecturers and students to develop effective information searching tools and skills programmes to support student learning.

There is also a difference in students' attitudes to printed and electronic resources. Students feel confident in using printed books but prefer the speed and access of e-books, but recognise they lack confidence in using the e-books. E-journals have a higher use but some students have difficulty with discovery and evaluation. Overall, there is a distinct preference for using 'e' and all of the students want more e-resources and more help in using them.

Technology will continue to be a key driver in delivering library services but it must be appropriate to the individual student and their preferred learning style as well as

aligning with the course pedagogical drivers. Social attitudes will also influence the technologies and communication tools that will be the most appropriate at any given time in the future. Students' expectations will continue to increase: more seamless virtual services, more personalisation, more intuitive tools and, possibly, more image and graphic based resources. A key challenge for the library service will be to retain a brand image in this virtual environment with its intuitive and seamless access to library resources.

All the students identify a continuing need for an adaptable, technology-enabled library space with staff to support their information and learning needs. This space should provide group and individual working with silent, quiet and discussion areas: somewhere to socialise, collaborate, work and study. The library is seen as a focal point within the university campus.

5. Action Plan (Adopted by Library Executive May 2008)

Key Area	Actions	Academic Year
1. Communication	1.1. Develop a communication strategy encompassing a wide range of technologies and channels	2007/8
	1.2. Identify communication channels using student networks e.g., PAL Leaders, Student Union, Student Ambassador Scheme	2007/8
	1.3. Develop additional communication networks from within the student taught communities	2008/9
2. Information Literacy	2.1. Develop and implement an information literacy programme that can provide support at the time of greatest need	2008/9
	2.2. Use myBU to develop personalised support programmes: ask BU; instant messaging and chat; co-browsing	Ongoing
	2.3. Develop potential of PAL Leaders to deliver peer support and promote new services and resources	2008/9
3. Support structure	3.1. Review library support structure for taught programmes: virtual and face-to-face	2007/8
	3.2. Subject Librarians to develop new partnerships with academics to support pedagogy and course delivery	2008/9
4. Resources	4.1. Increase the availability of core e-resources	2007/8
	4.2. Work with academics to provide innovative key text provision	2008/9
	4.3. Provide students with freely available or affordable e-resources	2008/9
	4.4. Develop brand awareness of library resources in the virtual environment	Ongoing
5. Immediate actions	5.1. Ensure issues raised in the Focus Groups of an immediate and operational nature are addressed in a timely fashion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote Library Blogs • Introduce RSS newsfeed • Discuss with ITS practical solutions for email functionality • Review supporting documentation to include more screen shots 	2007/8
	5.2. Take account of taught students needs when developing new Library space in Summer 2008.	2007/8
	5.3. Continue to develop mySearch to take account of taught students' information searching behaviour	2007/8

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APPENDIX 1

Literature Review and Questions Summary Table

The Net Generation: student use of academic libraries and their services.

Key point	Comments from the literature	Question for Focus Group
1. Information-seeking behaviour	Students look for convenience, timesaving, fast response. But as they move from using physical collections to the digital library, they risk being overwhelmed (Lukasiewicz, 2007). Information literacy: "In a sea of user-created content, collaborative work and instant access to information of varying quality, the skills of critical thinking, research, and evaluation are increasingly required to make sense of the world" (New Media Consortium/Educause, 2007). Libraries need to raise awareness of expensive & valuable library-sponsored content and make access simpler (CIBER, 2008).	How do you go about finding new information (for assignments etc)? How have you changed the way in which you look for information since you first started your course? What might help you find resources more easily? How do we develop tools and programmes to support your information searching? How do you decide if the resources are relevant? What resources are your tutors directing you towards?
2. E-resources	Small survey of students highlighted some reasons students didn't use e-books. Top reason was "hard to read and browse"(Chu, 2003). Larger student survey at UCL: growing interest in e-books; great diversity of resource discovery behaviour amongst students (Rowlands, 2007).	E-book provision is increasing fast. How is your use of print and electronic resources changing? Do you use e-journals? What do you like about using them? E-book provision is increasing fast. Do you use e-books and what do you like about using them? How could the library help you to find and use relevant quality electronic resources??
3. Communication	Libraries should provide virtual reference chat in a format students feel comfortable with (Lukasiewicz, 2007). OCLC Report (2007) : notes rapid rise in use of Blogs. Maxymuk (2007) notes prevalence of blogs on library sites and describes potential uses of wikis to disseminate information to library users. Social networking sites: reports from JISC (2007) and OCLC (2007) and others (Joly 2007) note that library and academic involvement in students' social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, MySpace) may not be popular. May be seen by students as unwelcome, an invasion of their privacy. But could emulate the style of such sites (e.g. on institutions VLE). See also CIBER, 2008 .	How can we best communicate with you? How important is it that we develop our virtual enquiry and information skills services?
4. New technologies	"Podcasts can provide structure and be an organizational tool for online learners" (Edirisingha et al, 2007). "Mobile phones are fast becoming the gateway to our digital lives [and] the time is approaching when these little devices will be as much a part of education as a bookbag" (New Media Consortium/Educause, 2007).	How do you think new technologies might help you study in the future? (e.g. mobile phones, iPhone, MP3 players, podcasts, chat gaming, social networks, blogs, wikis etc) Are you already using some of these? Have you used any of them in a learning context? How could myBU help this?
5. Learning space	Way in which library resources & library spaces are being used is changing. Influenced by new learning technologies and growth of student-centred and collaborative learning (Hunter, 2006 , reporting on JISC eSpaces study).	What sort of things do you want in terms of learning/library space?
6. Future role for academic libraries	CIBER Briefing Paper, 2008 . Information Behaviour of the researcher of the future. Report commissioned by BL and JISC. Tests hypothesis of a Google generation (born post '93). Digital information seeking behaviour & their use of virtual libraries. Notes that digital literacy does not equal information literacy.	If you can access everything online 24x7, do you think future students will need from library services?

APPENDIX 2
Focus Group 1 Notes

Bournemouth University Library Student Focus Group 5 March 2008

The Net Generation: student use of academic libraries and their services

Attended:

Linda Constable, Facilitator

Jill Beard, Academic Services

Stella Welsh, Academic Services

Emma Chapman, Applied Geography, Conservation Sciences, Year 3

Ben Griffiths, Public Relations, The Media School, Year 2

Questions for Focus Group

1. Information-seeking behaviour

How do you go about finding new information (for assignments etc)

- Lecturers – list resources on assignment sheets
- Talk to Subject Librarians
- Use Google search – using keywords from assignment title

How have you changed the way in which you look for information since you first started your course?

- Google everything in first year but now look for books and use journals more
- Improved and quicker since first year – in the first year lecturer gave books, journals and websites so encouraged to use range of resources
- Journals seemed more complicated at beginning of course
- Use more specific terms to search for information – use abstract and title
- Use Athens

What might help you find resources more easily?

- Smaller information skills sessions - at start of course had one lecture and group too large to deal with individual questions
- Address timetabling so that all students able to attend.
- Peer Assisted Learning Leader (PAL) provided information skills training in small groups so easier to ask questions.
- Journals (electronic and printed) were the most daunting to use including evaluation in terms of different types of journals i.e. scholarly peer-reviewed, trade and table top
- Preference for e-journals over printed journals – less photocopying.
- Searching for e-books more difficult than with printed books using the Library catalogue.

How do you decide if the resources are relevant?

- In the first year anything was considered relevant – now more selective - looking for quality not quantity as the assignment word count is an issue
- Start with the original theory

How do we develop tools and programmes to support your information searching?

- Students have to find out for themselves – younger students can, and probably would ask the Subject Librarian for help with electronic resources and older students perhaps tend to prefer to use the printed books
- Learn by doing it yourself.
- PAL Leader very useful
- Subject Librarian useful for references/information searching for dissertation.

What sort of resources are your tutors directing you towards?

- Lecturer advised purchasing printed copy of core text books.
- Provides a list of references to find –but may only include author and date.
- Assignment framework with number of different types of references required e.g. x journals, books and websites.

- Lecturer would suggest looking at theories from 'this guy'

2. E-resources

How is your use of print and electronic resources changing?

- Preference for e-journals over printed journals
- Preference for printed books over e-books.

Do you use e-journals? What do you like about using them?

- Easy to find
- Less photocopying

E-book provision is increasing fast. Do you use e-books and what do you like about using them?

- Perception that e-books harder to access and use – lack of confidence
- Use e-books but prefer printed books as used printed books for A level
- 13 year old brother uses e-books the same as 'I' use e-journals
- Lecturer provides a scanned copy of a whole chapter which makes the use similar to an e-journal
- Can pull out a page from an e-book

Don't like?

- Too much use of computer screen so useful to look at a printed book and can take it anywhere
- Like the book experience – can take it anywhere

How to release the potential of e-books?

- Device that would allow reading without the feeling of using a computer screen.
- Know how to search e-books and help provided by Subject Librarian
- Difficult to identify a specific e-book if only author and year available.
- More chapter use
- Browsing function
- More information in the PAL Packs

How could the library help you to find and use relevant quality electronic resources?

- More instant help from myBU or via email
- Help from staff

3. Communication

How can we best communicate with you?

- Students quite lazy and do not want to search for information and messages
- Emails – can go back to it
- Some lecturers will communicate using hotmail accounts but not all and most use BU account so need forwarding from BU email – need to consider filtering for some messages
- Students turn on computer then msn, email and Facebook

How important is it that we develop our virtual enquiry and information skills services?

- An instant messaging facility so that could ask questions any time and get an immediate answer – available from Library tab – Ask myBU or separate section. Needs to be prominent on web page and flagged up to all first year students.
- Include information in PAL Leaders Pack

4. New Technologies

How do you think new technologies might help you study in the future?

(e.g. mobile phones, iPhone, MP3 players, podcasts, chat, gaming, social networks, blogs, wikis etc)

Are you already using some of these?

- Yes. – some – MP3 players, podcasts, chat, Facebook.

- Not used wikis or blogs

Have you used any of them in a learning context?

- Lecturer recorded lectures onto podcasts – really good
- Lecturer used Facebook for group discussion – easier than myBU – not an intrusion - helpful.
- Some lecturers technology
- mobile phones - may be some students who cannot afford them
- text messages used to let students know if lecture cancelled – also on myBU
- text message if book overdue
- Blogs – not used and not aware of Library Blog – need to advertise

How could myBU help this?

- More available from myBU
- Presentation notes on myBU – good
- myBU Forum and Discussion

5. Learning Space

What sort of things do you think you, and future students, might want in terms of learning/library space?

- More group study rooms – pods are good idea – space and electronic access
- More spaces for fixed computers and laptops – booking system useful
- Course-specific software programmes available from library computers or personal laptops
- Social area – can re-arrange furniture (easy chairs good) for group work
- Mix of discussion areas and silent areas

6. Future role for academic libraries

Imagine a world where everything is online and can be accessed 24x7, what do you think future (about 2012 or later) students will need from library services?

- Electronic instant communication – 15 year old uses emails all the time
- Skilled Library staff to help with finding books and journals – ‘nice to know they are there’
- ‘There’ll always be a need for libraries and someone to talk to’
- Group study and social area
- 24x7 FAQs
- Co-browsing

APPENDIX 3
Focus Group 2 Notes

Bournemouth University Library Student Focus Group 7 March 2008

The Net Generation: student use of academic libraries and their services

Attended

Linda Constable, Facilitator

Jill Beard, Academic Services

Judith Hewins, Academic Services

Stella Welsh, Academic Services

Daniel Barnes, Multimedia Journalism, The Media School, Year 2

Zia Bales, Television Production, The Media School, Year 1

Claire Berresford, Forensic and Crime Science, Conservation Sciences, Year 2

Luke Campbell, PR, The Media School, Year 1

Ruth Cole, Events Management, Services Management, Year 2

Mo Hall, Psychology and Computing, Design, Engineering and Computing, Year 2

Zoltan Konder, Business School, MA

Emma Patfield, Business Studies, Business School, Year 2

Harriett Smith, Multimedia Journalism, The Media School, Year 4

Email response: Kelly Nicholas, Law, The Media School, Year 1

Questions for Focus Group

1. Information-seeking behaviour

How do you go about finding new information (for assignments etc)?

- Google
- Library catalogue (PRISM)
- Database Collection from Library website
- Internet – use e-journals – takes too long to look for a book and then searching through the index for relevant information
- Use key words or unusual words in title or assignment brief
- Start with a general word then get more specific
- Bibliographies
- Use mySearch for journals
- Reading lists
- Help from other students
- Help from lecturer
- Relevant websites e.g. Sage – can use Athens logon

How have you changed the way in which you look for information since you first started your course?

- More e-journals
- More specific search terms
- Buy recommended text books at the beginning of the course and not later on and had not got good use out of many of the books then
- Less books – everyone uses the same book

What might help you find resources more easily?

- Key text books (printed) available in Library – some courses may have more demand than others
- Course handbooks to include electronic resources and guidance
- More access to e-resources
- Key texts available as e-books – as cheaply and freely available as possible
- Simplify access - less passwords
- Personal help

How do you decide if the resources are relevant?

- Looking for something relevant and immediate
- Checking against assignment details e.g. title, abstract
- Availability is a consideration although more evaluation of resources as further into the course

How do we develop tools and programmes to support your information searching?

- Scheduling and frequency of library sessions/information skills programmes
- Incorporate practical exercises as additional learning element and for revision purposes- may forget by the time that need to use the tools
- More contact time with Subject Librarians including drop-in sessions

What sort of resources are your tutors directing you towards?

- Recommended text books (printed)
- Scanned chapters via myBU – encourage all to use them
- Only allowed to use e-journals for one course
- Lecturers email articles

2. E-Resources

How is your use of print and electronic resources changing?

- Rarely use paper books – printed book is a closed piece of information
- E-journals - new concept – prefer the printed book
- Use e-journals much more
- Prefer electronic access – use edit and find – it is more directed learning
- Google to find information but prefer to read printed – eyesight
- Use library for recommended texts (printed) rather than purchasing
- E-resources give latest information – ‘finding latest information has to be electronic’
- E-resource may be the only source of information e.g. online law cases

Do you use e-journals? What do you like about using them?

- E-journals much quicker
- Remote access and mobility – can read anywhere in the world
- E-journals more current

E-book provision is increasing fast. Do you use e-books and what do you like about using them?

- Scanned chapters useful but also need to also encourage background reading
- May help with referencing as this is an area of concern for some students especially as different lecturers may prefer different referencing styles

How could the library help you to find and use relevant quality electronic resources (e-books and e-journals etc)?

- Assistance with finding relevant e-journals - as too many and lots irrelevant – ranking system?
- Earlier skills training in using e-journals (at beginning of course – 2nd year too late)
- Regular sessions with Subject Librarian
- Athens confusing
- More information searching support – useful to have a practical exercise
- PAL session – more time on information searching
- Support at time of need
- Single logon
- Screen shots that available 24x7 and allow learning at own pace – available online or can print off
- Online chat as would be there when you need it
- More FAQs as available 24x7
- Seamless access to all resources (How maintain library brand?)
- Related search facility e.g. Amazon – if you found this useful you would also like
- More access to ILLs (only postgraduate)

- Use student experts

3. Communication

How can we best communicate with you?

- Best to have a librarian in person helping to search
- Email for updates e.g. new book/resource alerts – either BU email or personal – give a choice
- Instant messaging
- Not using unsolicited email texts to mobile phones

How important is it that we develop our virtual enquiry and information skills services?

- Critical that help is available when needed - 24x7, remotely, online and in library/departmental computers

4. New Technologies

How do you think new technologies might help you study in the future?

(e.g. mobile phones, iPhone, MP3 players, podcasts, chat, gaming, social networks, blogs, wikis etc)

Are you already using some of these?

- Most – some less aware e.g. wikis and blogs
- Gaming – not discussed
- Careful not to intrude on personal life

Have you used any of them in a learning/library context?

- Wikis
 - Some lecturers using Wiki and in a lighthearted way
 - Actively discouraged by some lecturers especially Wikipedia
 - Most think that need to evaluate authority e.g. Wikipedia
- Facebook
 - Some university departments have groups on Facebook – can choose to join or not
 - Students post dissertation idea and other students are invited to join in
 - Recruiting survey responses
- Podcasts
 - Lectures on podcasts – would it replace the lecture or is it a supporting resource?
 - Choice of delivery for lifelong and distance learners
 - Good for revision
 - Supports different learning styles i.e. learn by listening.
 - Download podcasts onto desktop
- Blog
 - Some TMS students have to do a blog as part of their course other TMS students not in favour as would be supporting something that would be taking over from their profession
 - Subject Librarians Blog would help

How could myBU help this?

- Library Blog on myBU for alerts to new services
- Managing BU emails
- myBU improved greatly since last September – ‘I use it every day’
- Subject Librarians Blog would help

5. Learning Space

What sort of things do you think you, and future students, might want in terms of learning/library space?

- More pod/group space

- More audio and computer links in social/group areas
- Printed books
- Video conference room
- More fixed computers
- Computer booking system – bookable and non-bookable
- More group rooms
- Wireless access throughout the space
- Silent study areas with break-out discussion/social areas
- Flexible
- Zoning works well

Use of smaller handheld devices that more portable than laptops may reduce requirement for fixed computers

6. Future role for academic libraries

- Everything online
- Social space
- Work space/environment – encourages study
- Evolving and flexible
- Staff to guide people through information/resource searching – will need help
- Online resources will still need interaction and the ‘library’ experience
- More than just a place where knowledge is held