

Happy Cards

Library Services

University of Bristol

About the organization

Organisation:	University of Bristol
Department:	Library Services
Size:	150 + staff
Industry Sector:	Higher Education

The University of Bristol (UoB) is a member of the Russell Group. The Library Service is responsible for 9 libraries (8 in the city centre) and a research store; is the institutional champion for study space, open access and research data management services. The Library is an active member of Research Libraries UK (RLUK) and the GW4 research partnership (Bath, Bristol, Cardiff and Exeter universities).

Background

24/7 opening at UoB was first piloted in 2012 at the Arts and Social Sciences Library and at the time this quick survey approach to measuring performance had already been successfully used at other HE institutions, branded as 'Happy?' cards. A desire for 24/7 had long been expressed by the student body and so in order to test initial satisfaction and take up it seemed appropriate to trial it there. Two dates were selected during the post Easter assessment period with cards being distributed at 11.30 pm on both occasions; students were asked to leave completed cards in a box on the way out. Response rates were good and the free text comments informative.

Use of Happy Cards

Happy cards (small 9.5 cm square forms) have since been used at UoB to ask a few carefully targeted questions of students using a particular library study space or element of the library service. All information gathered was fed into wider pieces of work being carried out on measuring performance in particular areas.

To date the Library has used cards to gather feedback on:

- Use of the Arts and Social Sciences Library between midnight and 8.00 during 24/7 opening periods, in particular to find out the length of time beyond midnight that students intended to remain studying.
- Use of the Queen's Building Library (Computer Science, Engineering and Mathematics), to find out which disciplines were using the library, what activities were carried out during a library visit and to ask for suggestions for improvements to facilities.

- Student perception about and use of AddLibS (additional library services for part-time and distance students) to find out whether services were being marketed effectively and to identify potential gaps in the service offer.

Example Happy Card:

The following “Happy Card” was used to ask about the study space at the Queen’s Building Library.

Happy?

www.bristol.ac.uk/library

University of
BRISTOL

We'd like some feedback from you on Queen's Building Library and how our space works for you.

Q1: What course are you studying?

Q2: What is your main reason for coming to the library?
To collect or return books ☐ To study ☐
To use PCs/photocopiers ☐ I don't use the library ☐

Q3: Where is your preferred place to study?

Q4: List one improvement that would make our facilities work better for you:

Evaluation of effectiveness of Happy Cards

Strengths

- Relatively cheap and quick to produce
- Quick and easy to complete
- Quick to analyse
- Size limits the number of questions so this really encourages you to focus on the key information you want to collect
- Can be completed anonymously so encourages honest responses
- Free text element enables other issues to be raised
- A good starting point

Weaknesses

- Difficult to tell whether views are a representative sample of the whole population
- Limited to a maximum of 4-5 questions
- Response rates may be low

For more information contact: jane.reynolds@bristol.ac.uk