

Questions and Answers from the Leeds Beckett Students Panel

(5 students, 2nd and 3rd years and a masters student, not all answered each question)

Questions asked from the floor (not prepared or submitted)

Statements in bold comments from delegates collected from emails or Twitter

Q. If you could choose when you had your library induction when would it be?

A. As part of induction week

Second week, as there is a lot of information to take in in the first week

After Freshers' Week but not too far in (before any work is handed in)

One induction was too late, four assignments had been submitted before they were given referencing and information on finding information

Move it back to about week 3 (but check when first essays are due)

Student panel consensus that induction should be early but not in first week of term. Too much information in first weeks, but need to be before first assignment

Q. What's the one thing you'd tell a new student about the Library?

A. Workshops offered that will help you throughout your studies

Speak to the staff – they are very knowledgeable (“nicest people in the uni”!)

Q. How do you feel about 24/7 opening?

A. Great for accessibility

Can work at any time, early morning or late at night

When students have invested £9000 they expect that level of access

Can pick up reservations whenever you like, don't have to wait until the next day if you forget

Able to fit study around working patterns

Don't need to plan when you will study/use the library, you can come in last minute.

5 out of 5 panel members enjoy the flexibility of 24/7, highlighting different study styles, the need to work around placements, enabling all people to learn in their own ways at their own times

Q. With 24/7 opening what things (staff?) do you expect to be available?

A. If in the library late/early there is a different type of studying. Generally happy to get on with writing up during those times.

Aware that library staff 'have lives' and cannot be available 24/7

Subject support out of hours would be nice, but a luxury

Q. Is there any point having library staff?

A. Yes, can ask staff specific questions

We can seek help as a group

Some students expect academic librarians to be more available.

Q. When speaking to staff in the library do you prefer Online? Face to Face? Email? Chat?

A. Just go speak to somebody

If you have a laptop and lots of books on your desk you don't want to have to pack those up just to ask a quick question. So chat is useful for that.

It's good to have online access to support, as many students live far away and commute in

A real mix of responses, depending on the type of enquiry (eg being shown a system, face to face)

Q. If you had a question about the library would you rather ask a staff member or a friend?

A. Staff member, as a friend might not know the answer. Can then tell friends how to do the thing

A friend, as that is more comfortable.

Q. What is the best way to get information to students?

A. Student email – this allows students to check back on information

Some students do not regularly check their student email

Not everyone has or regularly checks social media

The feedback whiteboard on the ground floor – was a passive way to quickly give feedback

Is there a way to tie communications in with MyBeckett (VLE)? Have announcements flash up on the screen when logging in

Came down to multiple channels are best, everyone had different preferences

Q. Has your library use changed over the course of your studies?

A. Don't know in first year about all the resources available. You get told in first year but don't take it in, but second year is the time to bed this in

All said yes varying from less intense to more – uses change as student needs do but also as students discover what's on offer

Interesting to hear that use of the library for some students started out as formal but is more casual. Changing uses all about building relationships with staff

Q. Is there any library jargon that you have found confusing?

A. Critical Thinking

Academic Language generally

Could we produce a pamphlet with a glossary of what terms are used and an explanation of what these mean?

Short video tutorials are helpful

Q. How do you feel about library fines?

A. Auto renewals has meant that students are emailed when they need to bring books back

Fines can be damaging, but they are good as a warning

Fines are important, but they're maybe too expensive

Students have a high cost of living and NHS students only get a small bursary, so even a small fine can make a difference. 20p can mean the difference between walking and taking the bus

A small fine can be two days of living (2 Tesco meal deals!)

How best to encourage students to return books other than fines?

Could we stop people from borrowing more items rather than fine them?

If the books are returned and the fines is over £10 then more items can't be borrowed. But, if the books are returned why should it still be in place?

Q. How do you feel about 'self-policing' peers in silent study?

A. Fine to self-police and tell other students to be quiet

An example was that when some students were told to be quiet they kept talking and security had to be fetched. This was awkward and may be a danger to personal safety. Could there be a way to text or chat with Security out-of-hours? So it can be done anonymously?

Q. EBooks or physical books?

A. Using a hard copy you can flick through and make notes

EBooks are more convenient

Access restrictions (limiting to one user) can make it difficult to access resources, especially if recommended by a tutor

With eBooks there can be a lot of redirection to different websites, can this be made easier?

You can print out and highlight eJournals

Mix of answers! Depends on what they're using it for

Q. If you could have one additional service (either library or non-library) what would it be?

A. Coffee available in the ground floor learning space – have to walk all the way round to get coffee

More provisions for students with hidden disabilities

Diverse reading lists (more BAME authors). Promote these types of resources more in the library

Q. If you could change one thing about the library what would it be?

A. The need for a student card after 7 pm – Security staff cannot verify that they are students another way. Had to go all the way home to get a forgotten student card, so they could stay in the library past 7.

The library provides so many great services, they should promote them more.