

Supporting Teaching and Learning in the Information Common (IC)

User Survey August 2007

- Surveys ($n = 788$) were completed and collected over seven consecutive days. Participants were given a coffee voucher for their participation on return of the survey.
- Survey responses were entered into an Excel spreadsheet over a 2 week period by a number of scorers.
- Where responses were deemed illegible or irrelevant to the question, responses were excluded from analysis.
- Questions 5b-11 allowed participants to provide open-ended responses to questions. Participants were provided the opportunity to provide more than one response to each of these questions. Responses were recorded into categories of theme created on review of 100 answered surveys. Where scorers could not categorise a given response into an existing category, the response was noted verbatim in an 'Other' category for that question. On data completion these answers were reviewed for theme-frequency and if additional popular responses emerged a category was created for these responses. Low-frequency themes remained in the 'Other' column for analysis.
- Where percentages were calculated, these were taken as a proportion of participants who, in light of the exclusion criteria, provided a response to the question.
- In Question 6, answers to the survey category 'intranet' was combined with 'computer and IT resources' as it was frequently miss-read as 'internet' by scorers.

1. Tell us who you are

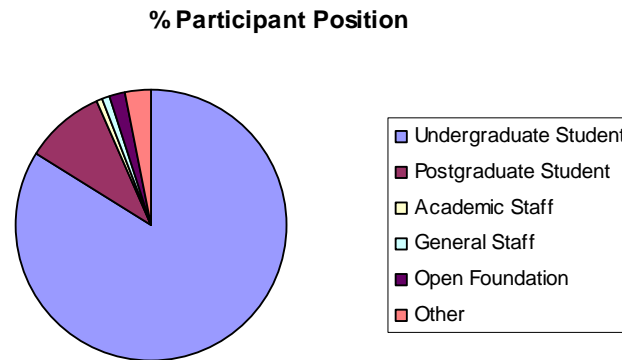


Figure 1 Pie Chart depicting respondent identification within the university

Of the 783 participants who responded to this question 84% ($n = 656$) identified themselves as Undergraduates, 9% ($n = 74$) as Postgraduates, 1% ($n = 8$) as Academic staff, 1% ($n = 5$) as General staff, 2% ($n = 17$) as Open Foundation students, and 3% ($n = 23$) as of other identification.

2. If you are a university student or academic staff member, what is your Faculty?

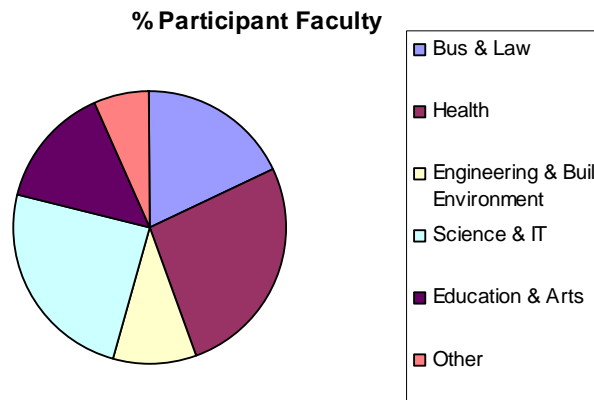


Figure 2 Pie Chart depicting Proportion of respondents by Faculty

Of the 711 participants who responded to this question, 26% ($n = 187$) were from the Faculty of Health, 24% ($n = 174$) were from the Faculty of Science and IT, 18% ($n = 129$) from the Faculty of Business and Law, 15% ($n = 104$) from the Faculty of Education and Arts, 10% ($n = 70$) from the Faculty of Engineering and Built Environment and 7% ($n = 47$) identified themselves to be of other affiliation i.e. Open Foundation.

3. *How often do you visit the Information Common?*

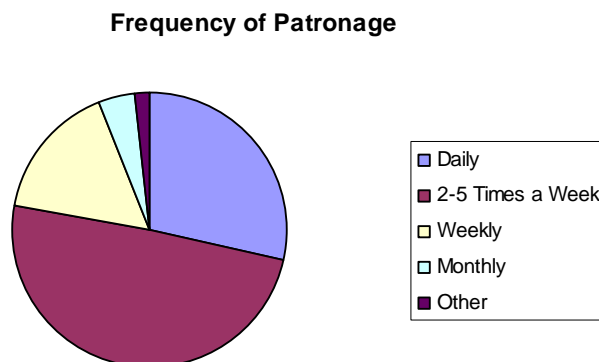


Figure 3 Pie Chart depicting frequency of patron visits as percentage of total responses

Of the 781 participants who responded to this question, 49% ($n = 384$) indicated they visited 2-5 times a week, 29% ($n = 224$) daily, 16% ($n = 125$) weekly, 5% ($n = 36$) monthly and 2% ($n = 12$) indicated they visited at other frequencies. Seven surveys indicated other frequencies of visitation or provided no answer.

4. How much time do you spend in the Information Common on a typical visit?

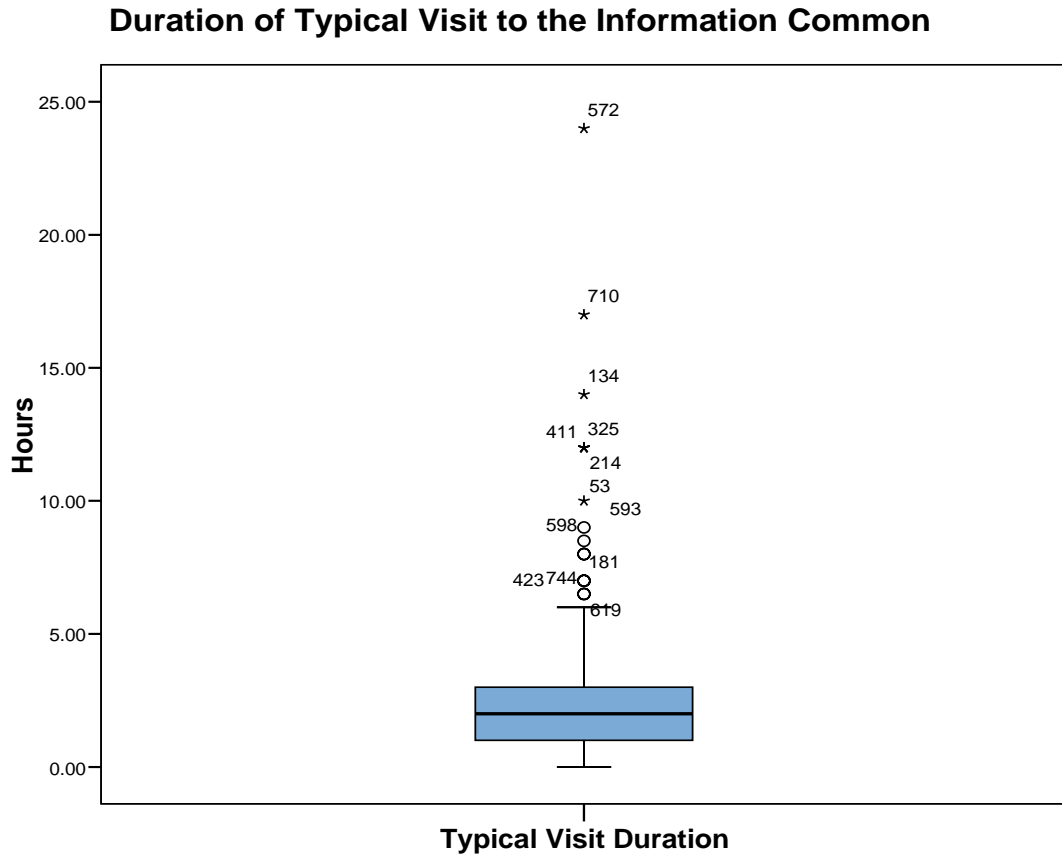


Figure 4.1 Box Plot depicting hours spent in a typical visit with outliers included

Duration of Typical Visit to the Information Common

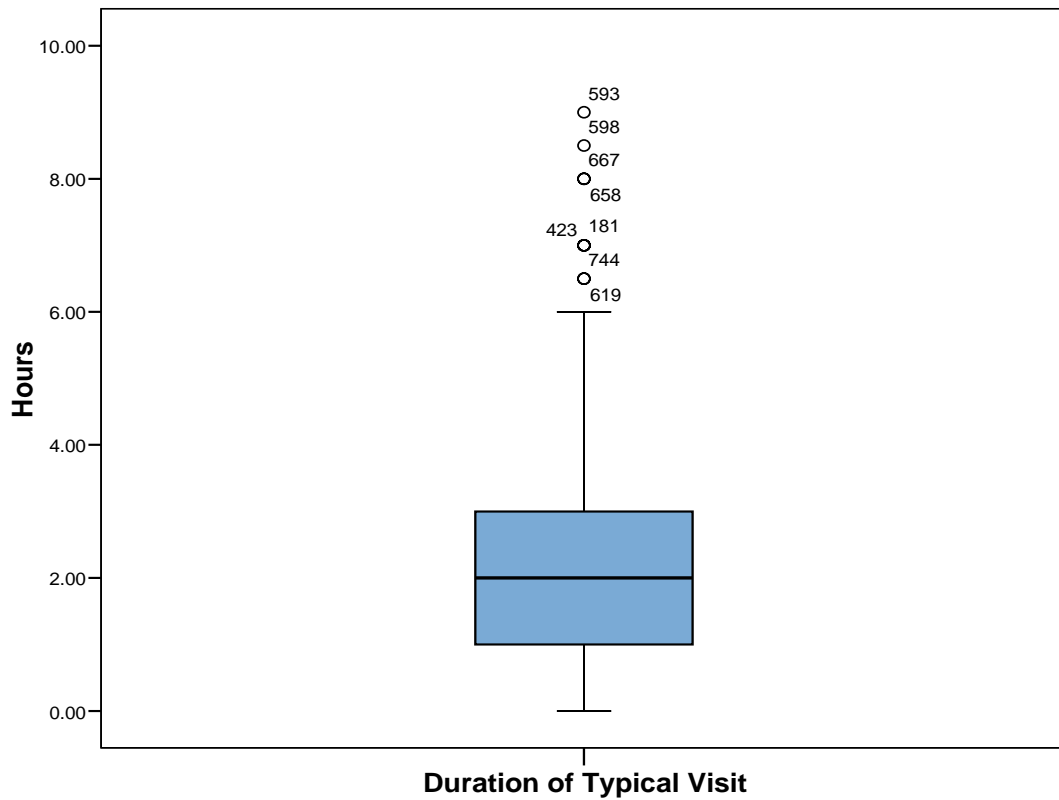


Figure 4.2 Box Plot depicting hours spent in a typical visit with outliers *excluded*

Of the 762 participants who responded to this question, 753 were included in the final analysis. Eight responses were excluded due to values greater than 2 Standard Deviations above the mean. Mean time spent on a typical visit to the information common was 2.05 hours.

5. Do you visit the Common between:
- a. 10:00pm and 3:00am YES / NO
 - b. 3:00am and 8:00am YES / NO

Participants Utilising AIC Overnight

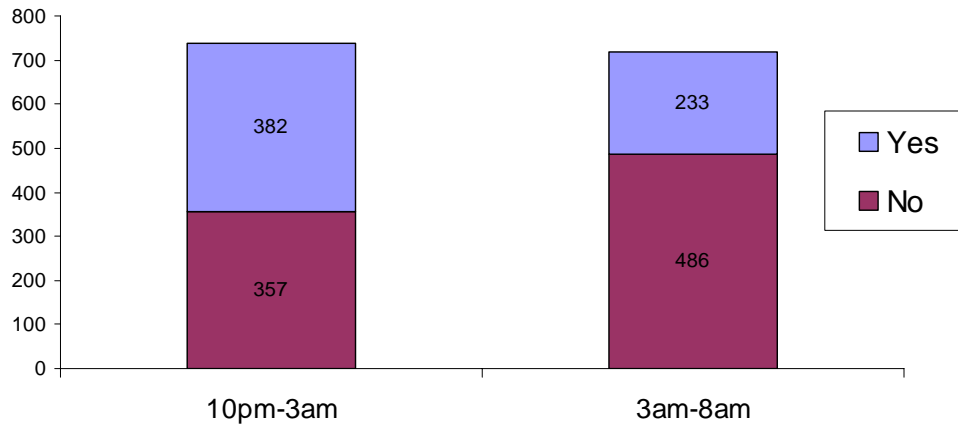


Figure 5.1 Bar graph depicting number of respondents who indicated visiting/not visiting between 10pm-3am and 3am-8am.

Participants Utilising AIC Overnight

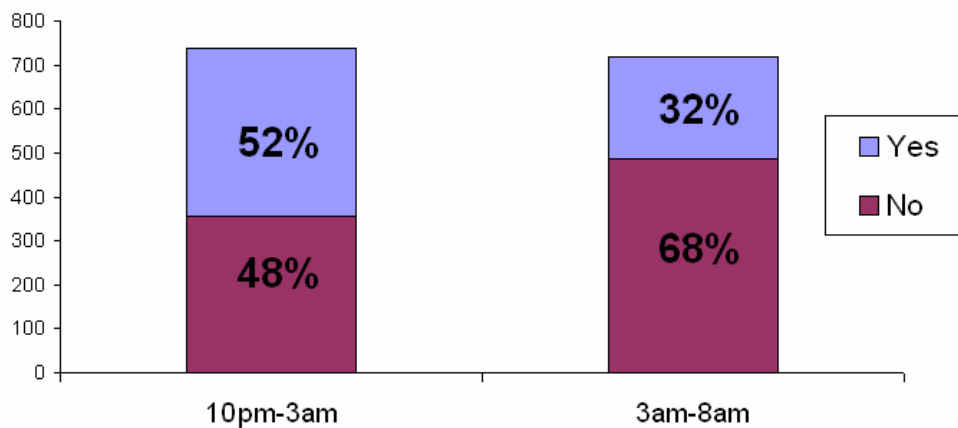


Figure 5.2 Bar graph depicting number of respondents who indicated visiting/not visiting between 10pm-3am and 3am-8am with numbers presented as percentages of responses.

Seven participants did not supply any response to this question. A further 24 participant responses were excluded from analysis as their responses to question 5c

demonstrated misunderstanding of the question (i.e. 'these times are between my tutorial classes'). Of the 739 participants who answered Question 5a, 382 (52%) indicated they visited the IC between 10pm-3am. Of the 719 participants who answered Question 5b, 233 (32%) indicated they visited the IC between 3-8am. Three-hundred and fifty-seven of the 739 (48%) and 486 of the 719 (68%) participants, responded they did not visit during hours of 10pm-3am and 3am-8am, respectively. Three-hundred and two participants indicated they did not visit during either of these periods.

5c. If you answered YES to either of these, why do you visit during these hours?

Why Patrons Visit During These Hours

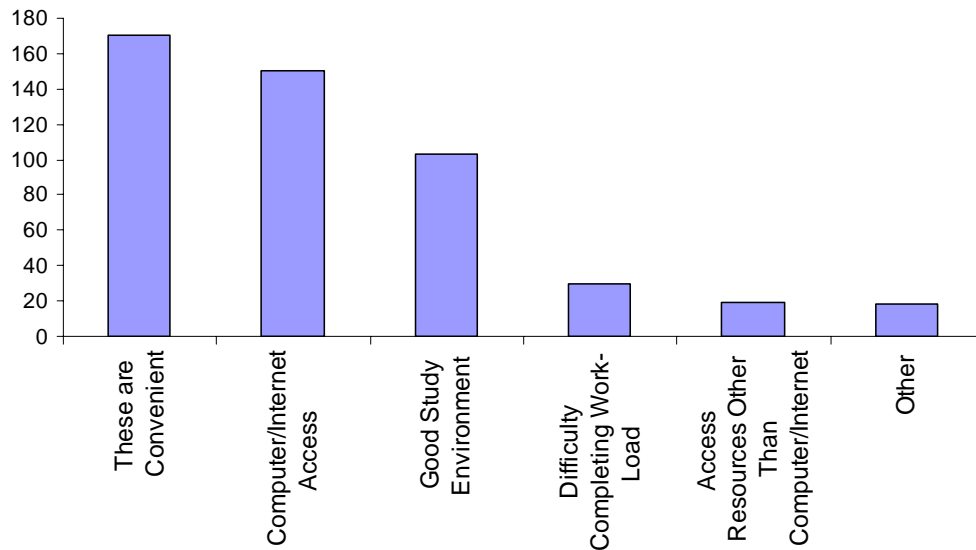


Figure 5.2 Bar graph depicting number of responses indicating use of particular IC facilities

Respondents whose responses indicated a misunderstanding of the question were excluded from analyses of questions 5abc. Seven-hundred and fifty-seven participants provided a response to this question. Responses indicated the majority of patrons used the facility between these hours because these hours were convenient for them ($n = 170$), followed by access to computer and internet resources ($n = 150$), provision of a good study environment ($n = 103$), a difficulty completing work load during traditional hours ($n = 30$) and access to resources other than computer and internet ($n = 19$). Eighteen respondents indicated other reasons for visiting during these hours.

Sample Responses to 5c:

These hours are convenient:

'It's when I have the most free time and my best studious mind' - 114

Computer/Internet Access:

'I have no home internet access' – 137

'No internet at home, good working environment, fast net access' - 66

Provides a good study environment:

'Quiet location no distractions able to complete work peacefully' - 438

I have difficulty completing work load:

'when I have a lot of work to do and when the deadlines are approaching. This service has been extremely valuable.' – 139

'late night cramming' - 547

Other:

'Sometimes to finish assignments or research' – 144

'Engineering building closes early' - 559

6. What services or facilities do you use in the Common? List as many as you like.

Use of Information Common Facilities

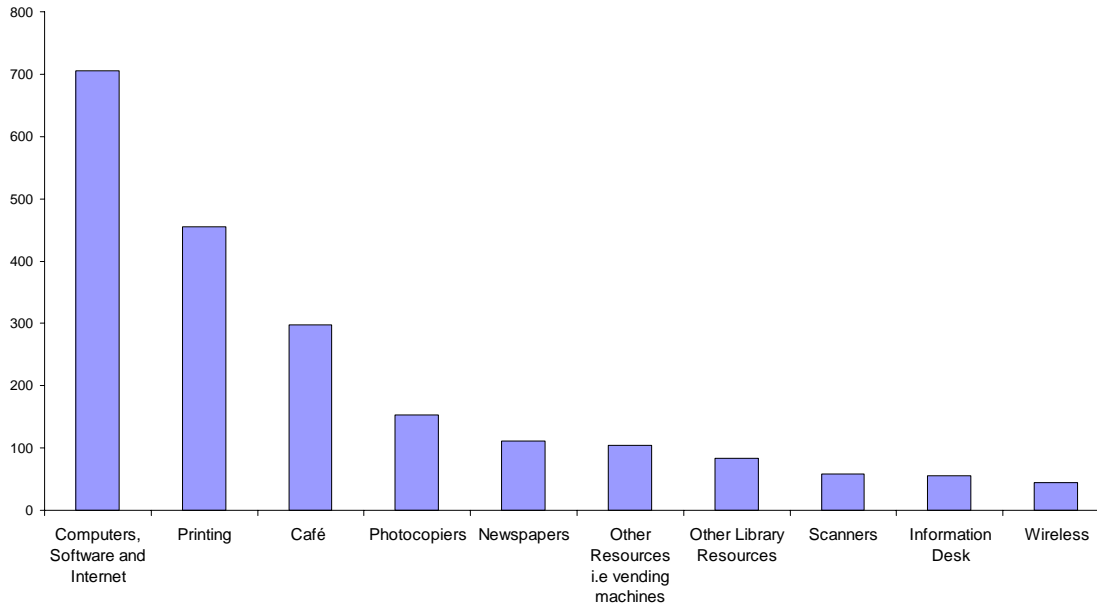


Figure 6 Bar graph depicting number of responses indicating usage of specific facilities

Seven-hundred and sixty-one participants provided a response to this question. The most commonly used facilities were computer facilities (mentioning at least computer, software or internet use) with 706 responses indicating use. The second most frequently reported facilities used were printing facilities ($n = 455$), followed by the Bytes Café ($n = 298$), Photocopiers ($n = 153$) and Newspapers ($n = 112$). Other resources of the facility such as vending machines, seating and the autoloader were the 6th most frequently cited to be used ($n = 104$) followed by Other Library Resources ($n = 83$), Scanners ($n = 59$), Information Desk ($n = 56$) and Wireless Internet ($n = 44$).

Sample Responses to 6:

Other Resources

'Seating' - 126

'Vending machines' - 114

'Scissors, guillotine' - 13

Other Library Resources

'Short loans, book loans, video/dvd equipment' - 389

7. What other activities (whether social, learning or leisure) do you use the Common for?

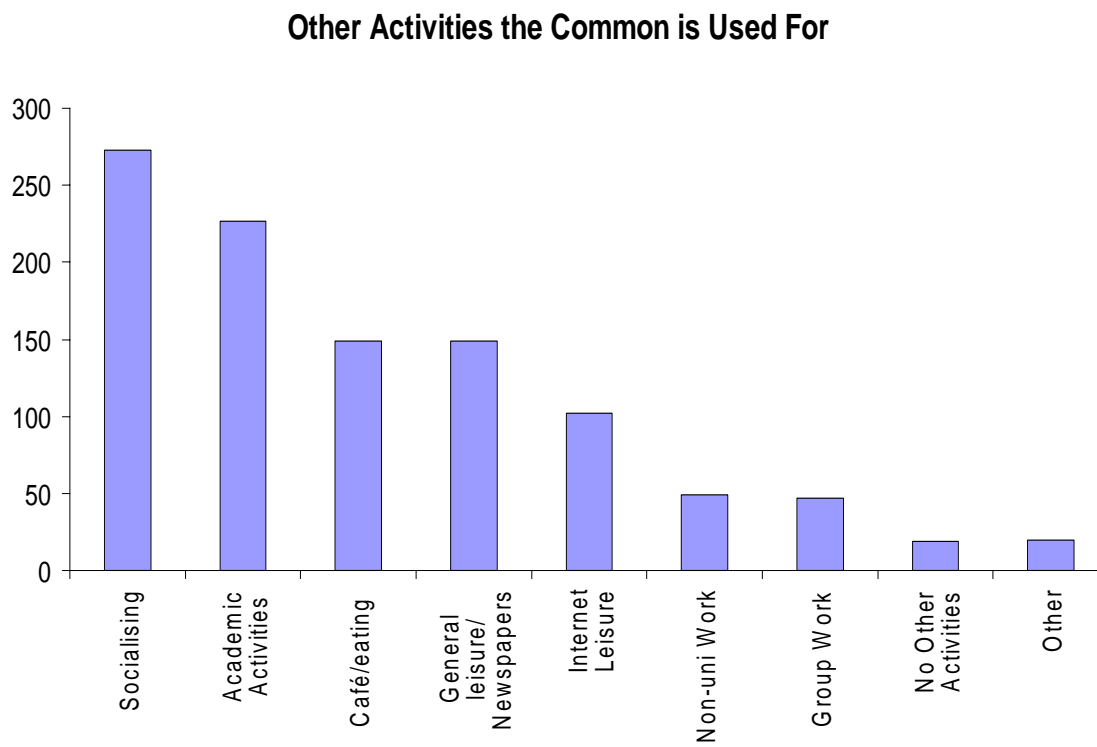


Figure 7 Bar graph depicting responses indicating activities the Information Common is used for

Six-hundred and forty-nine participants provided a response to this question. The most commonly cited activities were Socialising ($n = 273$), Academic Activities ($n = 227$), using the Café/Eating ($n = 149$), General Leisure (including reading newspapers; $n = 149$) and Internet Leisure ($n = 102$). Forty-nine responses reflected use of the IC for non-uni related work, 47 for group work and 23 reflecting 23 other uses including 9 reflecting the use of the IC as a meeting place. Nineteen participant responses reflected use of the IC for no additional activities.

Sample Responses to 7:

Socialising:

'Meeting friends' - 686

Academic Activities:

'Research, study with friends' - 288

Café/Eating:

'I use the café' - 307

General Leisure/Newspapers:

'Newspapers' - 519

Internet Leisure:

'Sometimes social, just general browsing of the internet' - 270

Non-uni Work

'Checking emails' - 265

Group Work:

'Group work' - 247

Other:

'Express computers' - 578

'Meeting place' - 748

8. How do you think that learning and studying using the Information Common has affected your assessments and quality of assignments?

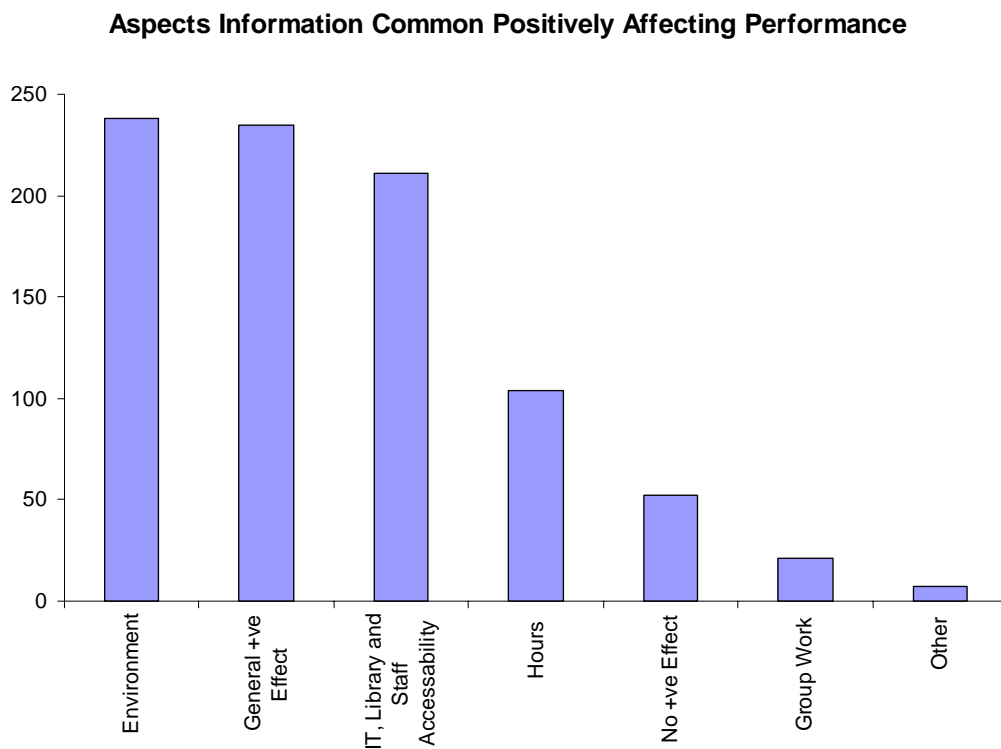


Figure 8 Bar graph depicting responses indicating aspects of the Information Common respondents consider to have affected their assessments and quality of assignments

Seven-hundred and three participants provided responses to this question. Two-hundred and thirty eight responded that said the environment of the IC had improved their assessment performance. Two-hundred and thirty five responses indicated a general positive effect of the IC on assessment quality but provided no specific information as to how. Two-hundred and eleven responses indicated accessibility of IC services (such as IT and staff services) to have positively effected assessment quality. One-hundred and four responses indicated 24 hour availability of the IC had a positive effect on assessment quality. Twenty-one responses indicated provision of an environment in which to complete group work had a positive effect on assessment quality and seven responses indicated other aspects f the IC having positive effects on assessment quality. Fifty-two responses reflected a belief that the IC had provided no positive or a neutral effect on assessment quality.

Sample Responses to 8:

Environment:

'Improved gives a fun place to study' - 83

General positive effect:

'Improved' - 687

Services: IT and staff (library and IT) accessibility:

'Allows use of fast internet resources' - 271

'Amazing, easy info and access to help- 73

Hours:

'It's provided 24 hour access to a computer with internet access and printing facilities' -

125

No positive effect:

'It has made it worse, Don't concentrate' - 285

Group Work:

'Has impacted in a positive manner on group work - individual assignments haven't been impacted as all the resources I need can be accessed at home' - 544

Other:

'Would not have improved quality (as sometimes can get quite noisy) but quantity as everything is here (toilets, beverages etc.)' - 567

'Easy access during breaks from class' - 315

9. How does the Information Common contribute to collaborative work and learning?

Aspects of Information Common Contributing to Collaborative Work and Learning

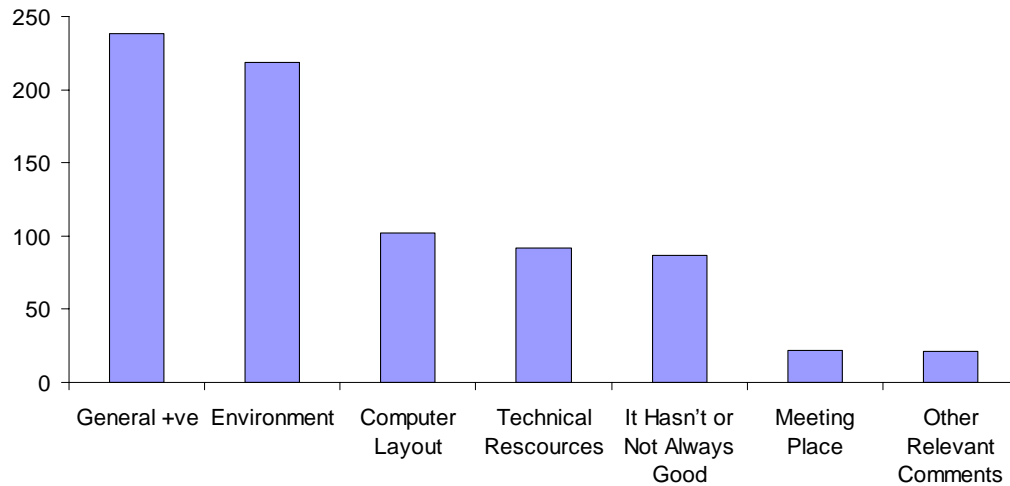


Figure 9 Bar graph depicting frequencies at which participants identified aspects of the information common to contribute to collaborative working

Seven-hundred and eighty-three participants responded to this question. Of responses provided, 238 indicated a General, though unspecified, Positive effect of the IC on Collaborative Learning, 219 reflected beliefs that the IC provides as good Environment for Collaborative Learning, 102 that the Computer Layout of the IC was conducive to Collaborative Learning, 92 responses indicated technical resources made available in the IC contributed to Collaborative Learning and 22 indicated the IC to be a good place to meet for Collaborative Learning. Twenty-one other relevant comments were made. A further, 87 responses indicated either that that IC had not been beneficial in this way because they were not involved in group work assignments or because they found the environment unsuitable for Collaborative Learning.

Sample Responses to 9:

General positive comment:

'Make working in a group easier' - 74

Environment:

'It's a very good place which tolerates talking, very good collaborative learning' -

111

Computer Layout:

Couple of friends can sit together with computer and doing assignments - 3

Technical Resources:

*'Good, I come here to do group assignments, as we can all have access to a computer
at the same time' - 24*

It Hasn't or It is Not Always Good:

*'The layout limits the potential for effective groupwork - lounges along side wall are
the only suitable area' - 542*

Meeting Place

'Meeting Point' - 11

Other:

'Focus - a campus heart and soul' - 422

'Close to all facilities' - 788

10. What are the most beneficial aspects of the Information Common for you, in terms of a learning experience?

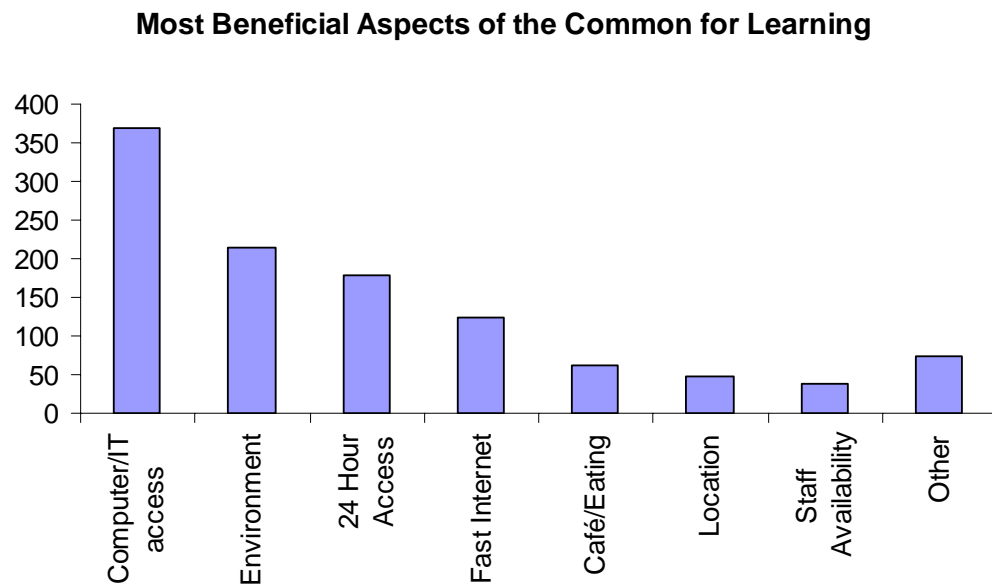


Figure 10 bar graph depicting by frequency of mention aspects of the information common respondents identified as beneficial

Seven-hundred and twenty-six participants provided a response to this question. Participants identified the most beneficial aspects of the IC to be 370 identified access to computer/it services ($n = 370$) its environment (including both people who liked working with noise and also people who liked working in a quiet space after hours; $n = 216$) and 24hour availability of services ($n = 179$). One-hundred and twenty-four responses specifically mentioned high internet speed as an advantage and 63 the presence of the Café and/or ability to eat in the Information Common to be beneficial. Forty-seven responses indicated the Location of the IC (either within the university or close to the library) to be a beneficial and 37 mentioned the availability of staff to be beneficial to their learning experience. Seventy-three responses reflected other miscellaneous aspects of the information common respondents found beneficial to their learning experience.

Sample Responses to Q10:

Computer/IT Access:

'Quality computers and net facilities are extremely beneficial as I cannot afford to purchase my own. The fact that I have AIC access 24/7 is immensely beneficial' - 681

Environment:

'Somewhere to study with little distraction' - 29

24 Hour Access

'24 hour availability and the internet' - 34

Fast Internet

'Fast Internet' - 158

Café/Eating

'Coffee' - 36

Location:

'Always accessible when needed. Location.' - 155

Staff Availability:

'Staff always available to help out. With anything.' - 27

Other (unspecified benefit):

'Suitable environment for group study' -132

11. How do you think the Information Common could enhance its ability to provide greater support to student learning?

How the Information Common Could Provide Greater Support to Student Learning

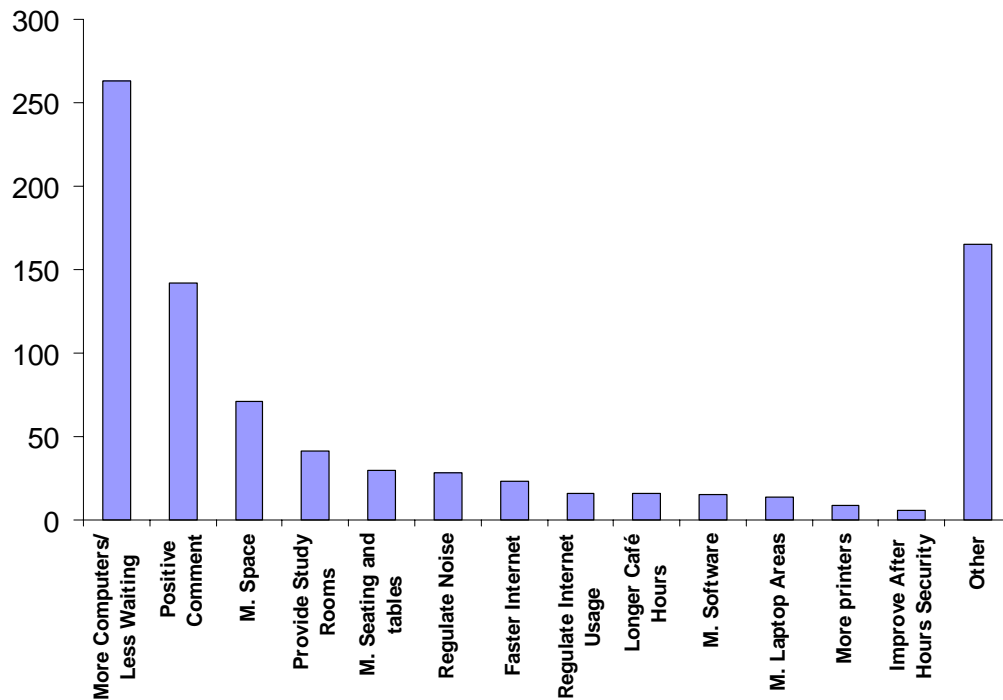


Figure 11 Bar graph depicting by frequency of identification by respondents how the Information Common could greater support learning

Six-hundred and fifty-four participants provided a response to this question.

The most commonly cited area for improvement was the provision of more Computers/Less Waiting ($n = 263$). However, 142 responses to this question included a positive comment about IC services. Of the remaining responses, More Space ($n = 71$), Private Study Rooms ($n = 41$), More Seating/Tables ($n = 30$), Noise Regulation ($n = 28$), Faster Internet ($n = 23$), Regulation of Internet Usage ($n = 16$), Longer Café Hours ($n = 16$), More Printers ($n = 9$) and Greater Security arriving/leaving the building After Hours ($n = 6$) were most frequent. The diversity of responses to this question is demonstrated by the occurrence of 165 ‘Other’ miscellaneous suggestions for improving the IC’s ability to provide support for student learning.

Sample Responses to 11

More Computers/Less Waiting:

'More computers! At peak times wait can get pretty long' - 24

Positive Comment:

'Having done a degree at another uni that had NOTHING like the AIC I think it's FABULOUS!'

More Space:

'More space to spread out papers' - 370

Provide Study Rooms:

'Providing enclosed 'break out rooms' were student groups can conduct meetings without distracting the students who are studying' - 153

More Seating/Tables:

'More seating with tables, because those at the front often fill up' - 332

Regulate Noise:

'Have signs asking people to keep noise to a minimum. It is extremely annoying when people talk loudly on phones or to the friends around them.' - 681

Faster Internet:

'Faster Internet & more computers' - 306

Regulate Internet usage

'More computers, not allowing myspace style access' - 21

Longer Café Hours:

'Get rid of the coffee machines and open the café till midnight' - 88

More Software:

'the computers be provided with medical dictionary / programmes/ software to assist learning' - 310

More Laptop Areas:

'More space for laptop area...' - 525

More Printers:

'More Printers' - 344

Improve After Hours Security:

'Might not be exactly what is meant here but often I'm discouraged from coming late at night because I have to park so far away and feel unsafe at night. I know this is an issue for many people + steps them stops them sometimes from benefiting from the AIC' - 181

Other:

'Hammocks' - 244

'With the info common being open 24/7 there is no room for improvement- it is awesome!!! So grateful we have it!!! P.S. perhaps a microwave or bytes café to be open longer.'

'book return chute, bring entire reference section down here' - 112