Customer consultation and feedback policy

The mission of the University of Sussex Library is to provide appropriate, efficient, effective and intuitive Library services in support of the teaching and learning, research, enterprise and engagement objectives of the University, as outlined in the University strategic plan 2013-2018, and to contribute to delivering an enhanced student and staff experience.

One of the key principles and values that underline the approach we take in delivering our mission (and its associated objectives) is one of **active consultation**. As stated in our current Library Strategic Plan, we aim to consult and seek feedback on all our services to ensure that we understand our customers’ needs and expectations and develop our services to meet these needs.

This customer consultation and feedback policy sets out:

- why we consult and seek feedback on our services;
- how we inform customers and library staff about the services that we provide and what they can expect when using them;
- how we gather feedback on our services;
- how we tell customers and staff about the feedback we have received and the actions that we have taken in response to it;
- when we review the feedback we have received;
- when we review our customer consultation and feedback policy.

**Why we consult and seek feedback on our services**

- to ensure that we understand our customers’ current and future needs, experiences and expectations, enabling us to identify service developments and improvements;
- to ensure that we critically assess our services and the information that we provide about them.

**How we inform customers and library staff about the services that we provide and what they can expect when using them**

**Customers**

1. Service standards exist for all major services and are reviewed annually. These describe the service, its availability, how performance is monitored and performance reported to customers. We also aim to conduct an Equality Analysis for each major Library service.
2. All new services including any major developments are publicised widely using the appropriate University-wide channels, both online and in print (e.g. University Bulletin, Library Update, University news channels)

3. The Library website carries descriptions and guidance for all major services and we aim to link the pages to the relevant SLAs. It also carries information about service performance and offers customers opportunities to give feedback.

4. Where appropriate there is use of posters and signage for new and existing services.

5. The enquiry services are available at our Information Hub, by phone, email and via an instant messaging service.

6. There is Library representation at University Teaching and Learning, Research and Knowledge Exchange and Doctoral School Committees

7. The attendance of senior Library staff at Academic School and departmental meetings on request

8. Library Consultative Group meets termly and has strong representation from academic staff and students. The papers, including the minutes, of these meetings are published openly

9. The use of Library Twitter and Facebook pages

Library staff

1. The Library intranet provides a central repository for information and all staff are encouraged to post to it.

2. General staff meetings (for all Library staff) are held termly at which the University Librarian presents information about developments within the University and Library operational plans are discussed.

3. Emails are sent to all staff from operational leads when any changes are made to services or anything new is introduced

4. Regular team meetings are held and minutes are distributed to all staff

How we gather feedback on our services

1. We use a range of methods to consult and gather feedback on services. The choice of method and the design of the consultation will be based on:

   - a recognition of the number of surveys and other consultations, such as the National Student Survey, and the need not to conflict with any of these
   - the characteristics of those we want to contact and any preferences that they have concerning this
- the need to capture insight on future needs as well as feedback on quality of our services
- the need to contact people who do not ordinarily use the Library or its online services

2. We make it possible for customers to give us ‘instant’ feedback on our Library via feedback cards and forms

3. The methods to gather feedback from customers include:
   - Library Consultation Group
   - Surveys, including UK-wide surveys such as the NSS, University surveys and Library surveys
   - feedback via Schools and our Students Union
   - focus groups
   - observation by staff of service usage
   - monitoring of Key Performance Indicators
   - benchmarking
   - complaints and comments
   - feedback forms and instant messaging on the Library website
   - Library Twitter and Facebook

4. The methods that we use to gather feedback from staff include:
   - one-to-one meetings
   - team meetings
   - faculty meetings
   - annual planning Away Days
   - project working groups
   - annual appraisal interviews

5. We review our feedback methods annually to identify ways in which they can be improved. This will include benchmarking ourselves against other university libraries and looking at best practice in other sectors including the private sector.

**How we tell customers and staff about the feedback we have received and the actions that we have taken in response to it**

1. We ensure that our customers and staff are given the results of any consultation and that they receive an explanation of how we will respond to any feedback we receive.
2. Results and actions that we have taken in response to our Annual Library Surveys are published and promoted widely in the University.

3. Our policy relating to handling complaints can be accessed via the Library website.

4. All customer comments and complaints are responded to individually within an advertised timeframe.

5. All feedback received and responded to as part of University Committees are fully documented and made accessible to all.

**When do we review the feedback we have received and when do we review our Customer Consultation and Feedback Policy**

1. Results from our customer consultation and feedback are reviewed on an annual basis and are used to inform the Library’s annual planning round and to prioritise service developments.

2. This policy is reviewed annually by the Library’s Management Team and any changes are taken to the Library Consultation Group for approval.

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