The Auchmuty Information Common: Implementation and Success at the University of Newcastle

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WHERE IS NEWCASTLE?

FEATURES

1965

- Student population of over 26,000
- 3,500 international students
- Only 40% of the first year intake are school leavers
- 27.4% of the student cohort is in the lowest socioeconomic bracket nationally
- Distance education students make up 4% of enrolment
- Indigenous student population is over 2% of intake, across all programs
- A research university with regional responsibility
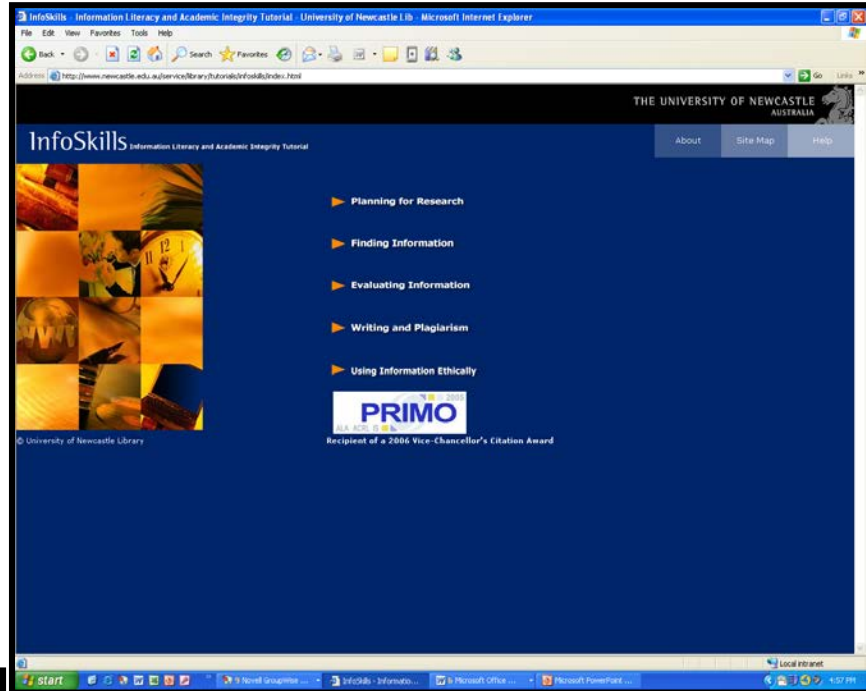
UNIVERSITY PROFILE

LIBRARY PROFILE

STAFFING

Converged library and IT service environment

BUILDING BLOCKS

Preference for online full text resources and online reference services

Expanding use of Blackboard for on-campus, online and off shore student cohorts

- 40% of courses now offered online
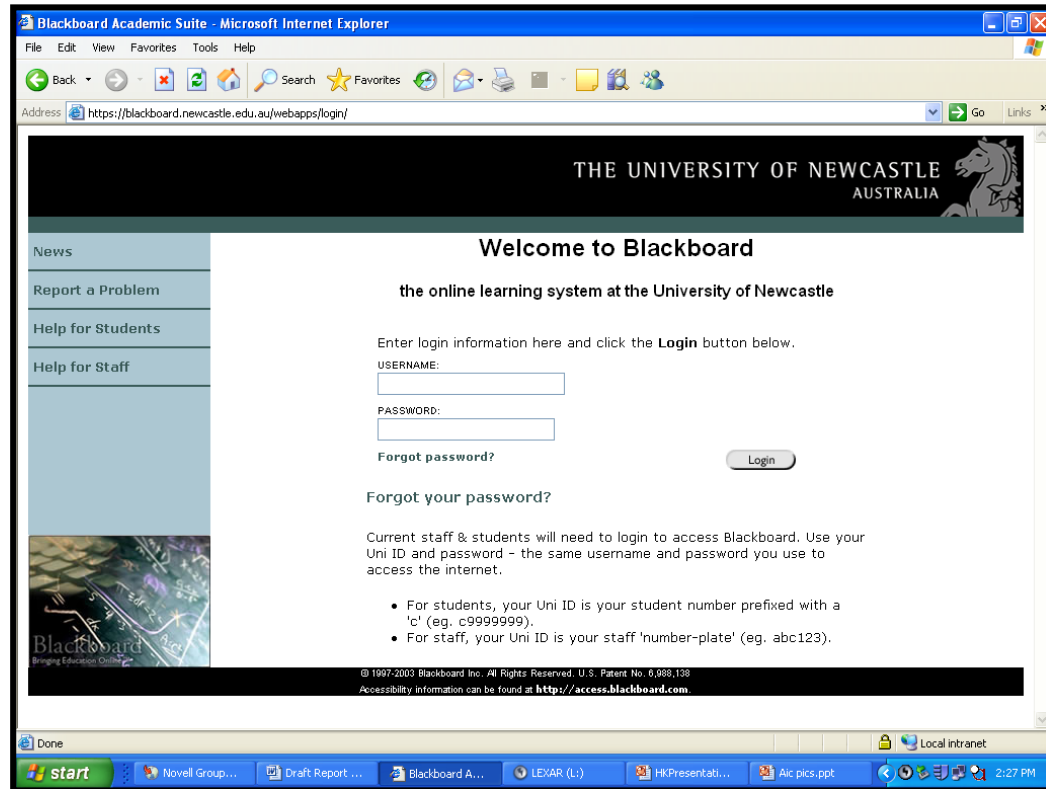
Facilities on Campus

- Poor facilities
- Unfriendly Cinta Block labs
- Not enough computers

- Performance and benchmarking tool since 1998

- Communication; Service Quality & delivery; Facilities & equipment; Staff; Virtual Library

- 2004 -Newcastle's performance was average/below average - availability of computer facilities set a new low level Awareness Campaign

IN THE PAST

Poor response rates led to questionable / unreliable results

Fewer numbers tend to pick up people who are taking the time to make a complaint

TO THE PRESENT

The higher the response the more reliable the results – high degree of confidence this year 99% +/-3%

IN 2006 a large proportion of the staff and student population responded giving overall confidence in results (4,349 surveys returned)

TOP 10 IDENTIFIED MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES

Adequate opening hours
Computer access
Access to electronic resources
Friendly & helpful Library staff
Easy to use catalogue
User friendly, informative web site
Adequate collection
Easy to find course specific resources
Photocopying & printing facilities
Treated fairly & without discrimination

Sign L1 & L2

VINYL

Sign L3

Sign 9

COPIER PR PR

CARPET dark

VINYL

LAYOUT BENCH

Sign 5

VINYL

CARPET dark

CARPET light

CARPET dark

Sign 3

Sign 5

CARPET dark

VINYL

Sign C5

Sign 4

CARPET light

Sign 2

L4 L4 L4 L4 L4

Sign 3

Sign 7

VINYL

CARPET dark

Sign 6

Sign H1

VINYL

CARPET light

CARPET dark

Sign B2

VINYL

Sign F1

Sign D7

Sign D1

Sign D2

Sign L4

Sign L4

Sign L4

Sign G1

Sign L4

EXISTING CARPET

Sign M1

Sign G1
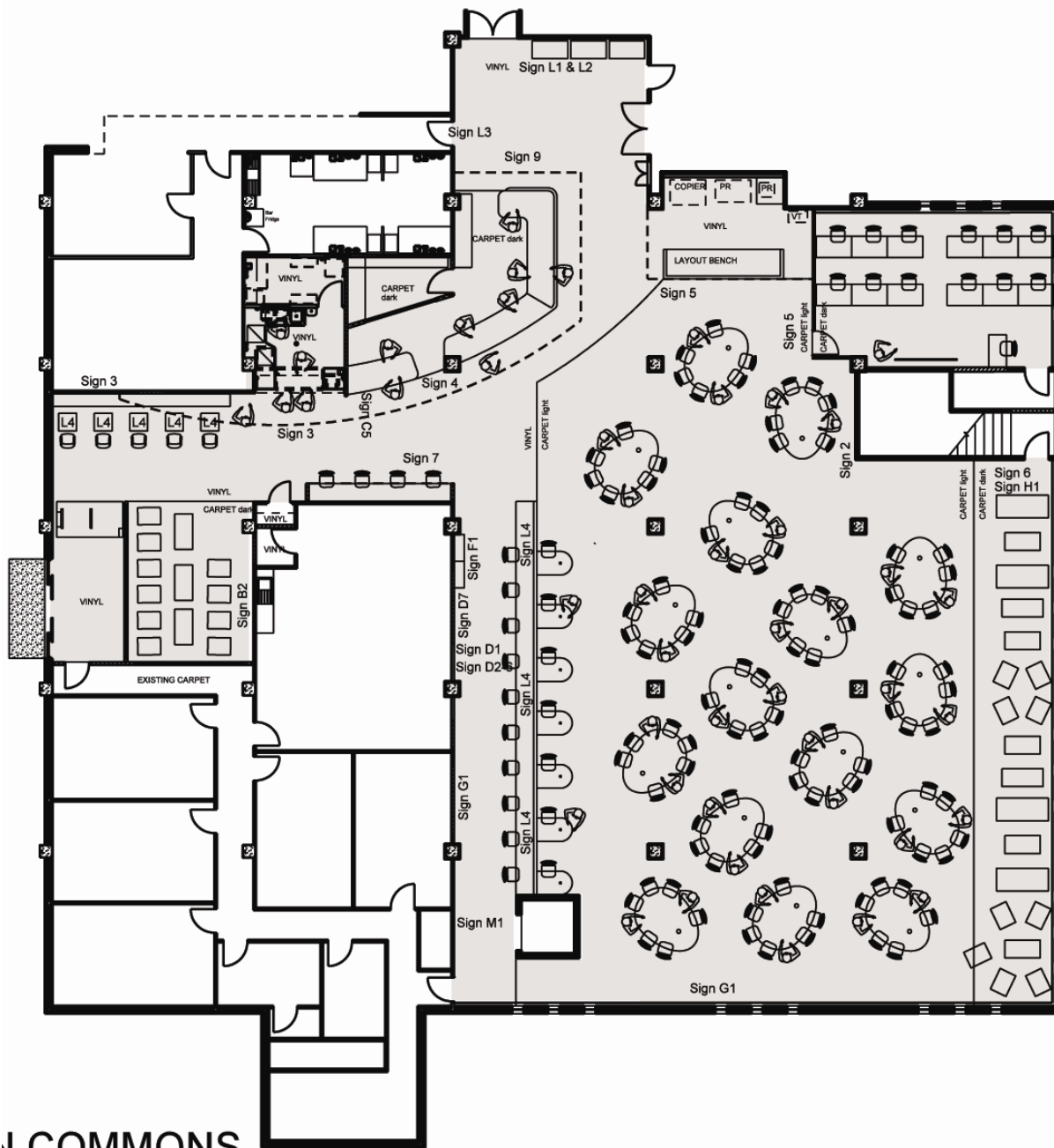
COMMONS
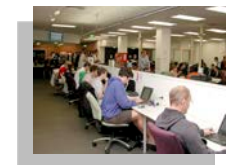
ENTRY

NEWSPAPER

LOUNGE

CAFE

PRINT AREA

LAPTOP BENCH
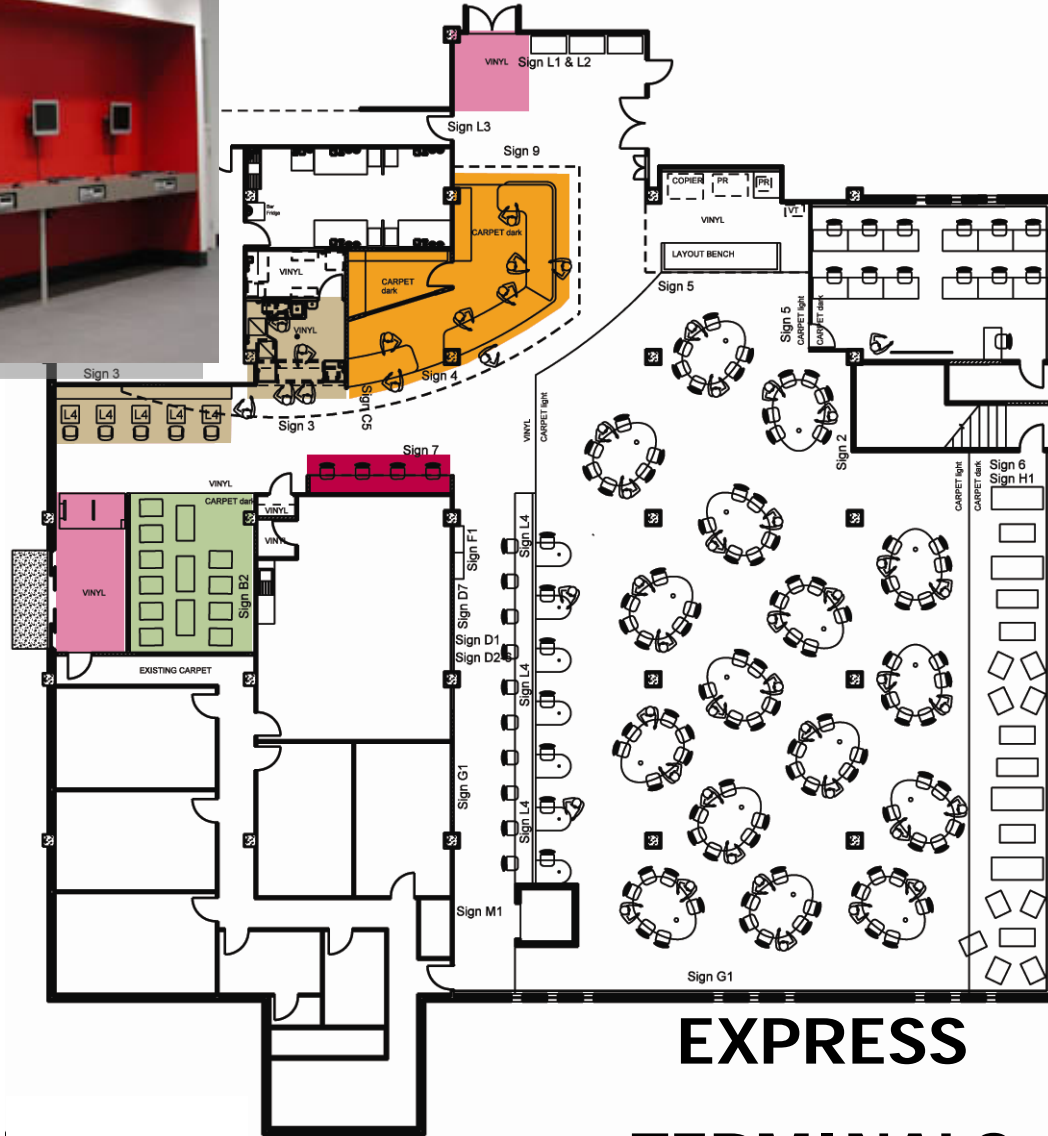
EXPRESS

TERMINALS

• Facilitate collaborative work
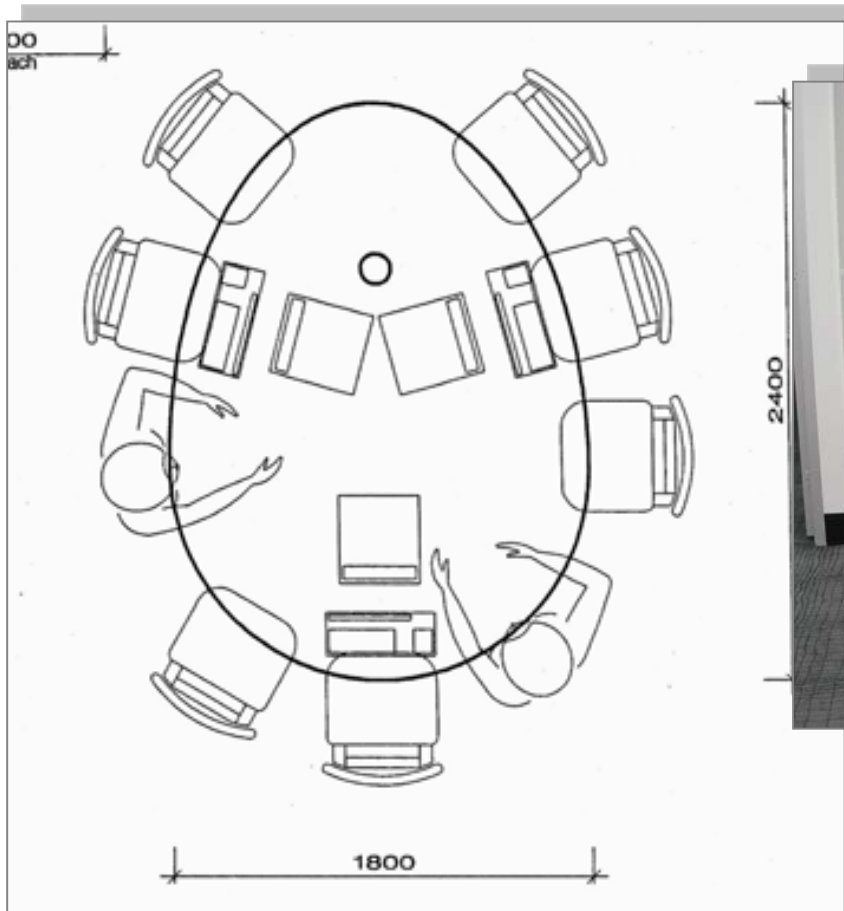
- Enhance client experience

- Enhances the casual ambience

- Extremely successful from client service and commercial perspective
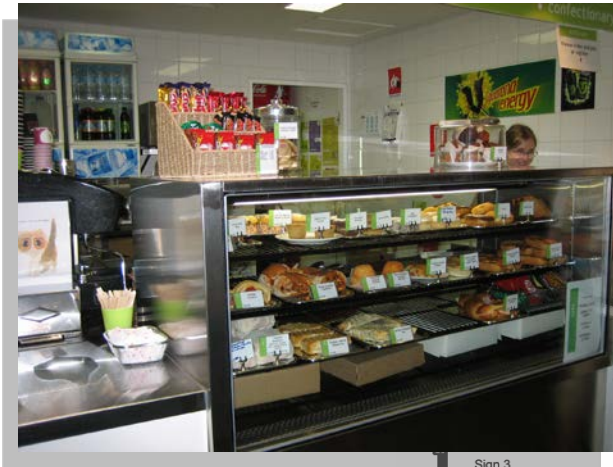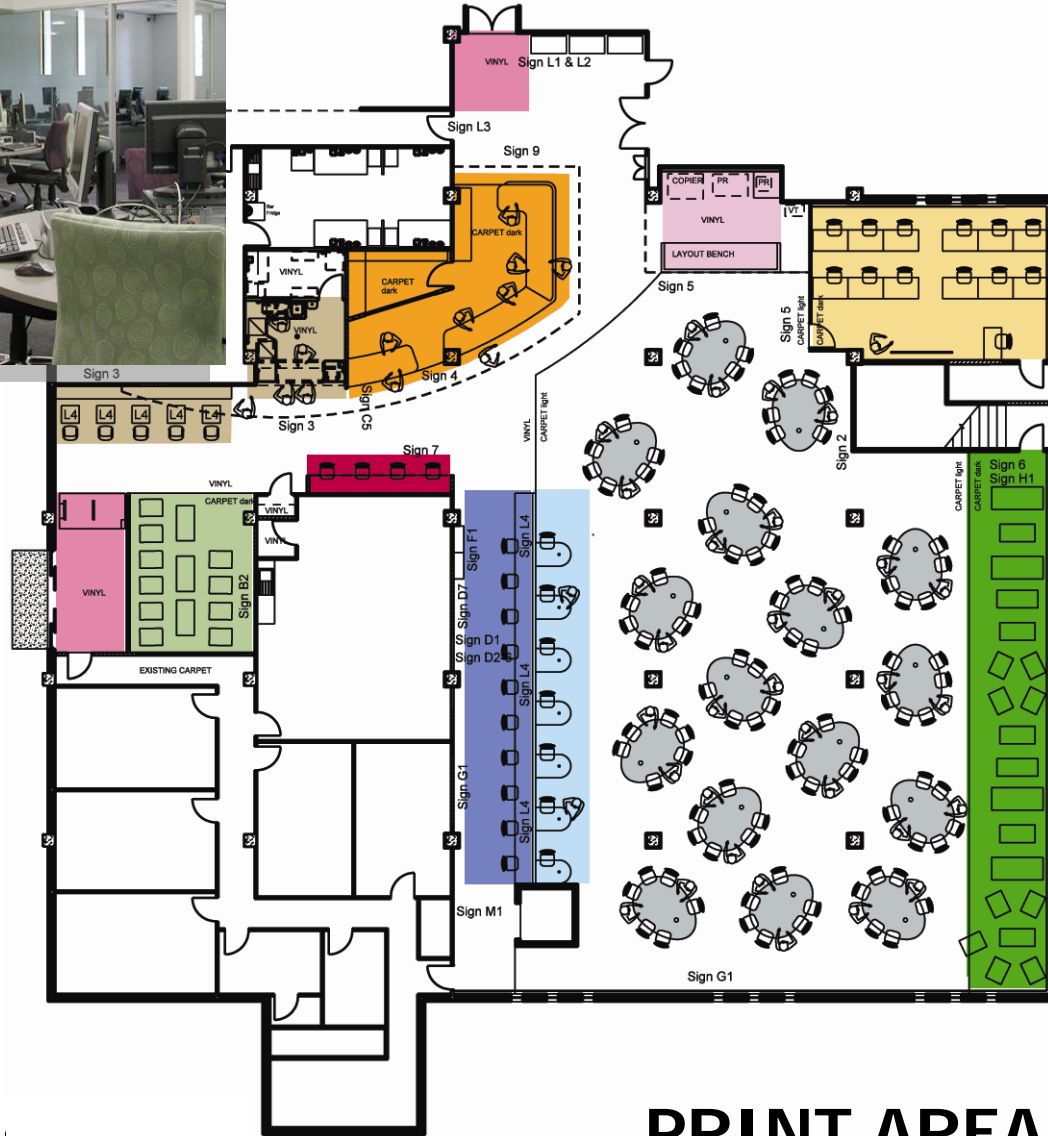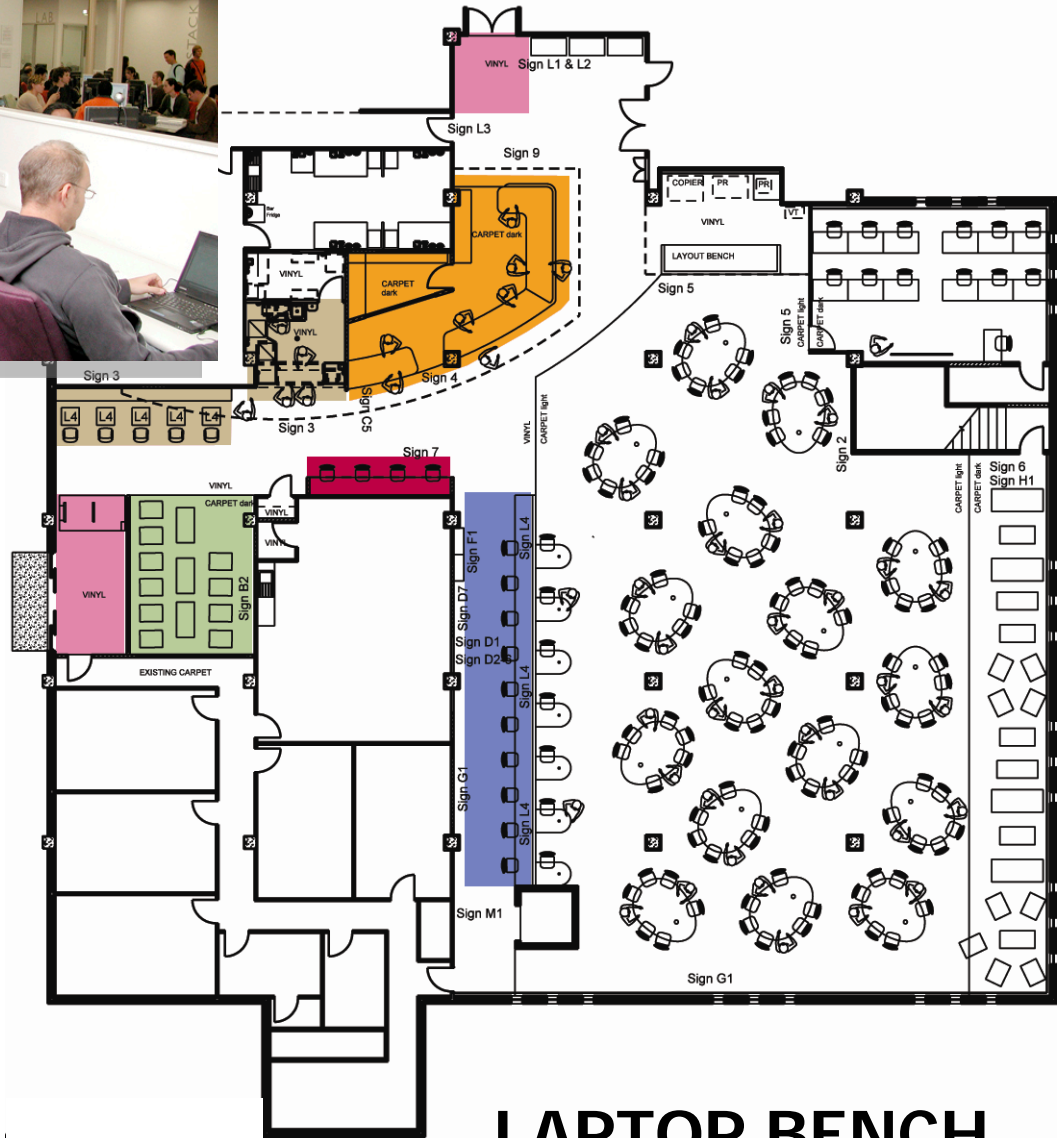
- Percentage of profits returned to the Library

- Rover provides elementary IT support proactively

- 'How to' enquiries; relating to software applications, IT devices, as well as general maintenance of equipment (including cleaning)

- Rovers are primarily students with solid IT backgrounds

- Rover support is provided whenever the IC is open, including the late night shift between 10pm and 8am

SERVICE MODEL- FIRST TIER

- Library and IT staff provide more in depth assistance

- Enquiries may be referred by rovers

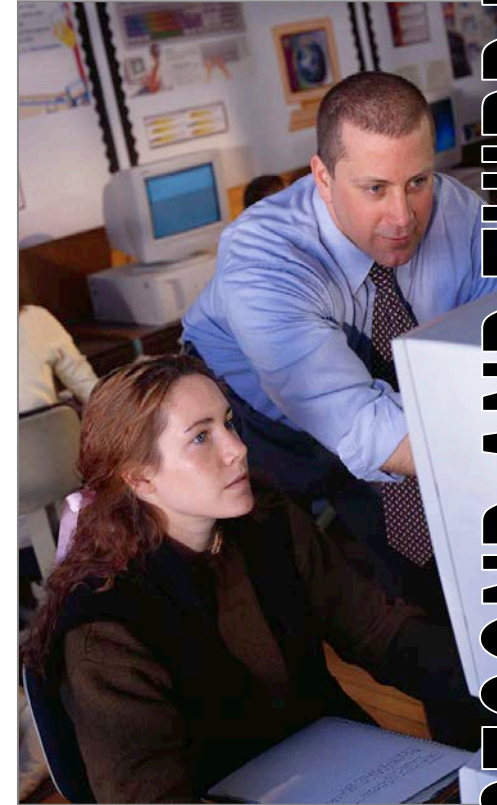- Library staff have acquired sufficient skills through commitment to converged service model to assist with complex enquiries in the absence of an IT professional

- In depth consultation for complex enquiries

- Referred by IT and library staff to IT specialists at University service desk and Faculty Librarians

- The Public Face of the AIC 24 hours a day.
- The positions are casual but recognised as being an essential part of the Information Common

ROVERS

- The relationship with the client drives the philosophy of the AIC

- During any shift Rovers will encounter a variety of enquiries and demands

- As the AIC is the only 24 hour service on campus the Rover needs to be prepared to deal with a range of customer situations.

- Recruitment 2008 – 100 applicants
- We train the ten successful applicants and the five on the eligibility list
- Provides the opportunity to develop rapport between trainers & new rovers
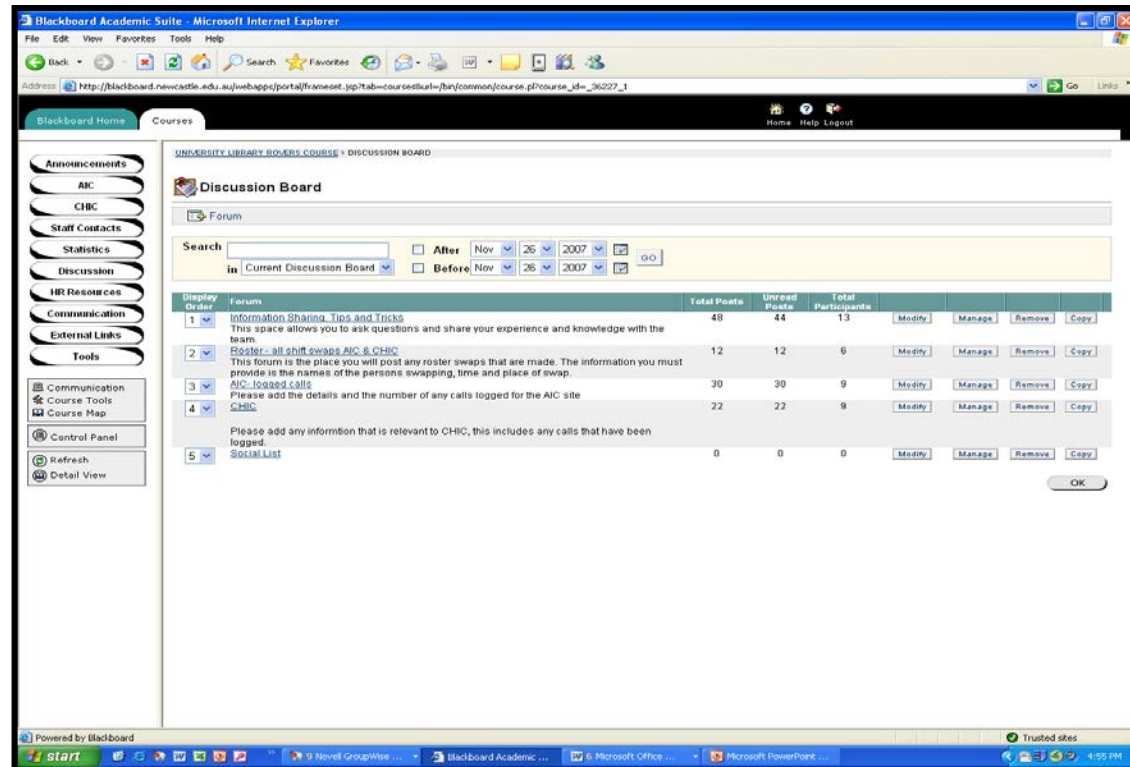- Transition from student to staff member

- 3 day training program
- Occupational Health & Safety - Mop training
- Evacuation
- Guest Speakers
- Client Service Training
- Orientation desk shifts

- Effective communication with the group is vital
- Rovers are subscribed to an email list
- Blackboard course which has ongoing training information, procedures and a discussion board for hot topics.

- Staff provide support for Blackboard and Turnitin
- If the AIC expands then a learning support area would be included in the new layout.

Library vs. IT Enquiries

AIC Enquiries: Library Versus IT
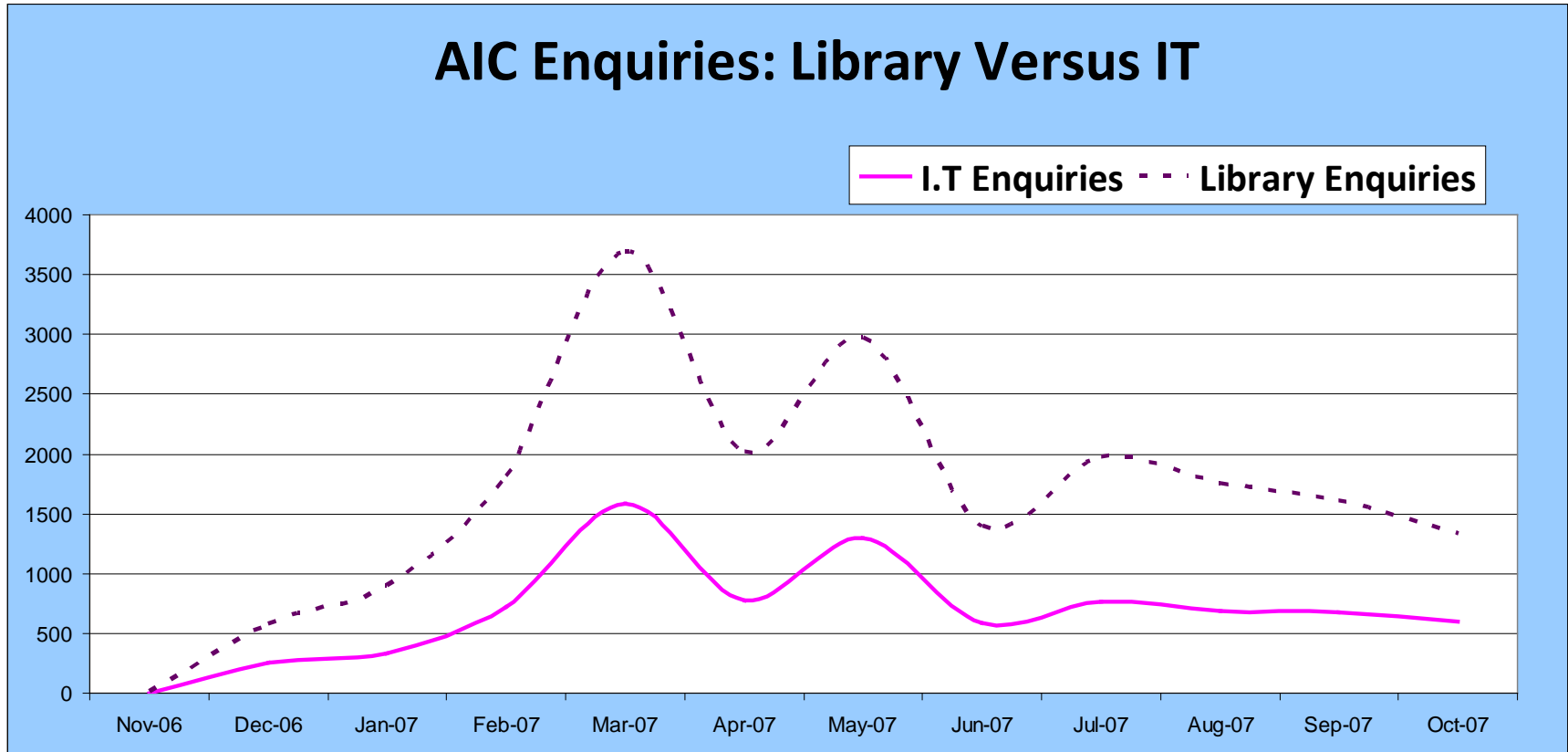
- Staff enjoy lively atmosphere and work environment

- Wider knowledge of University service environment is essential

- Ongoing training in software & technology

- Communication network on campus

IMPACT ON LIBRARY

- AIC officially opened November 2003
- Total visits to library increased by 22% in 2004, has increased to 30% in 2007 compared to 2004
- New AIC entrance accounted for 42% of building entries in 2004, increase to 55% in 2007
- Approximately 3,000 people per day visit the AIC.
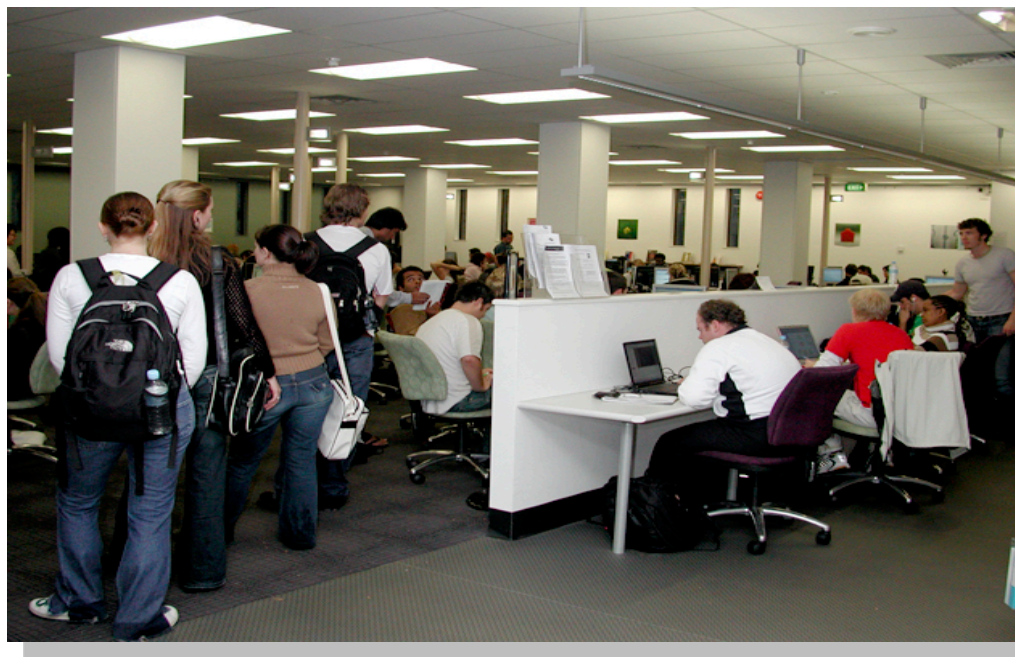
- 100 % capacity 9am -6pm
- Dramatic decline in use of other on-campus labs resulted in reduction of their opening hours during nights, weekends and vacations
- Operates 24 x7 during semester

24 x 7

24 x 7 opening

24 x 7 staffing

24 x 7 reference service via email, SMS and phone

- A week in August:-
  - 3049 people accessed the AIC after 5pm.
  - 10pm to 2am, average 50-60 people per hour
  - Quietest time between 6am and 7am

CLIENT SURVEY

788 patrons surveyed over 7 days

Who they are?

How they used the Common?

Did the service contribute to improved learning outcomes?

2007
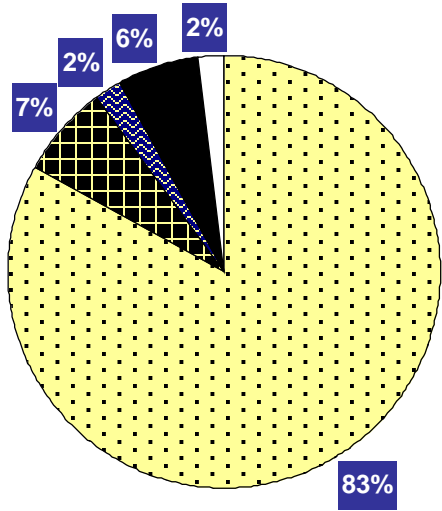
2004

83% undergraduate

7% postgraduate

6% enabling programs students

2% staff

2% other (ie non-university)

% Participant Position

2007

84% undergraduate

9% postgraduate

2% enabling programs students

1% academic staff

1% general staff

3% other (ie non-university)

SURVEY

% Participant Faculty
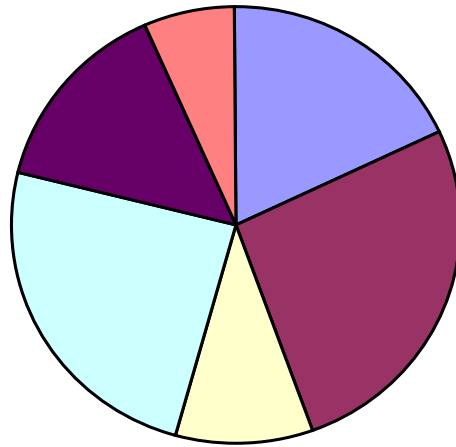
Legend:
- Bus & Law
- Health
- Engineering & Built Environment
- Science & IT
- Education & Arts
- Other

26% Health – enrolment 18%

24% Science and Information Technology – enrolment 14.7%

18% Business and Law – enrolment 17.3%

15% Faculty of Education and Arts – enrolment 26.5%
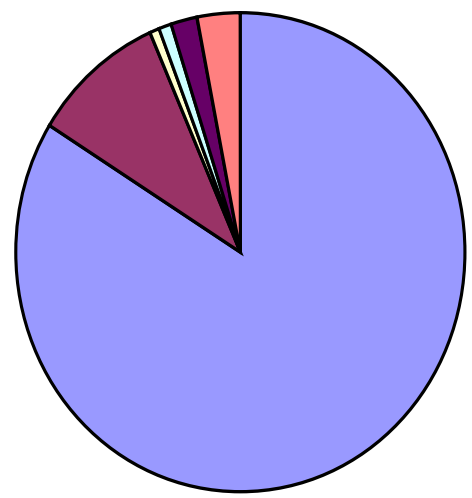
10% Faculty of Engineering and Built Environment – enrolment 11.6%

7% English Language and Foundation Studies – enrolment 5.3%

SURVEY

29% visit the Common daily
49% visit the Common 2-5 times a week
16% visit the Common once a week
5% visit the Common once a month
Average stay – 2 hours

Frequency of Patronage

- Daily
- 2-5 Times a Week
- Weekly
- Monthly
- Other
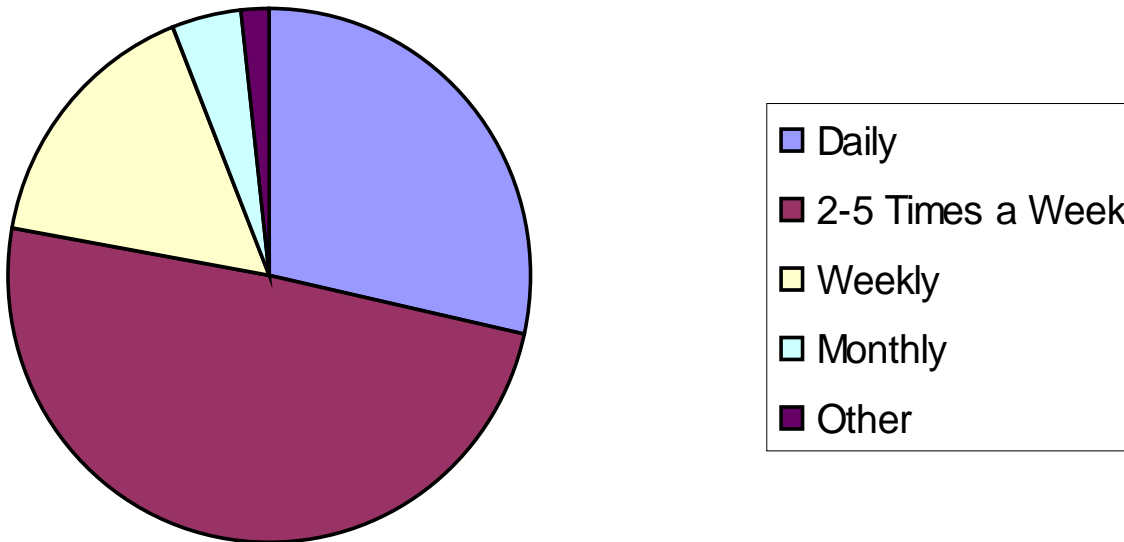
SURVEY

Participants Utilising AIC Overnight
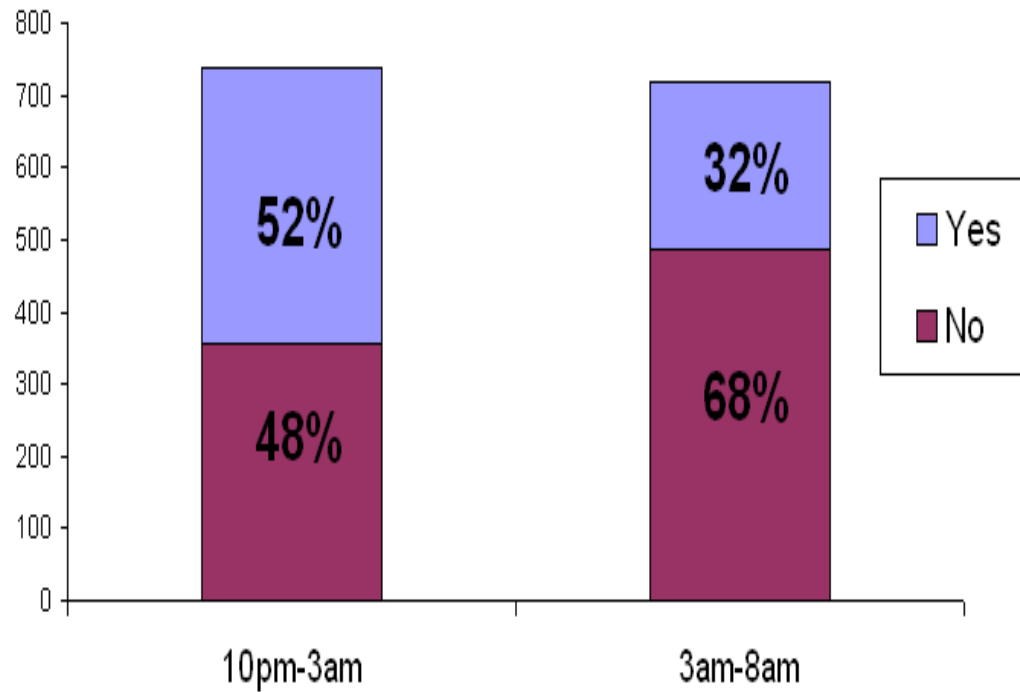
Why Patrons Visit During These Hours
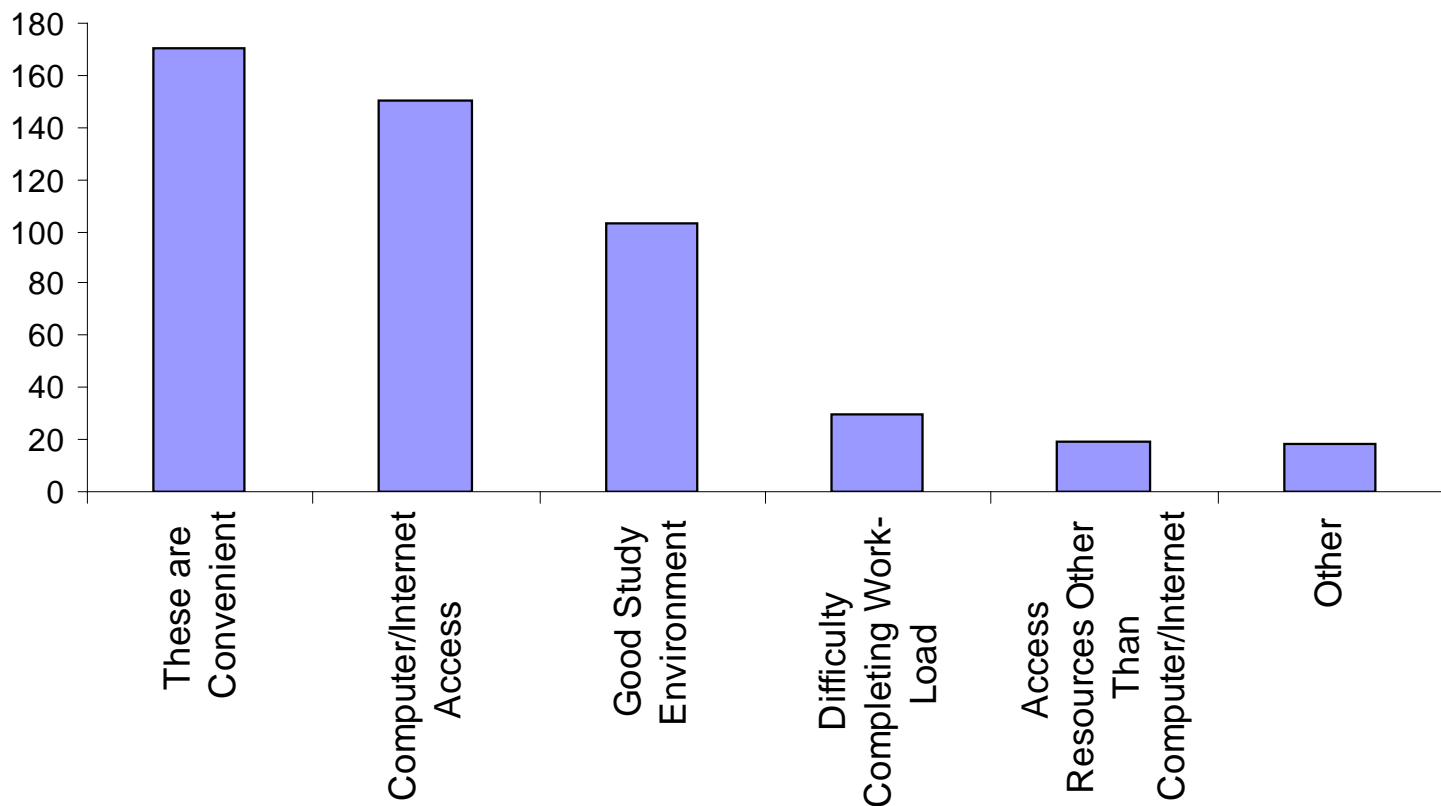
SURVEY

- "Its when I have the most free time and my best studious mind"

- "No internet access at home…fast net access"

- "Quiet location with no distractions "

- "Necessary to my life style, free parking"

- "When I have a lot of work to do and when the deadlines are approaching"

- "stuff due, easy to get computer, can't sleep"

SURVEY

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

Use of Information Common Facilities
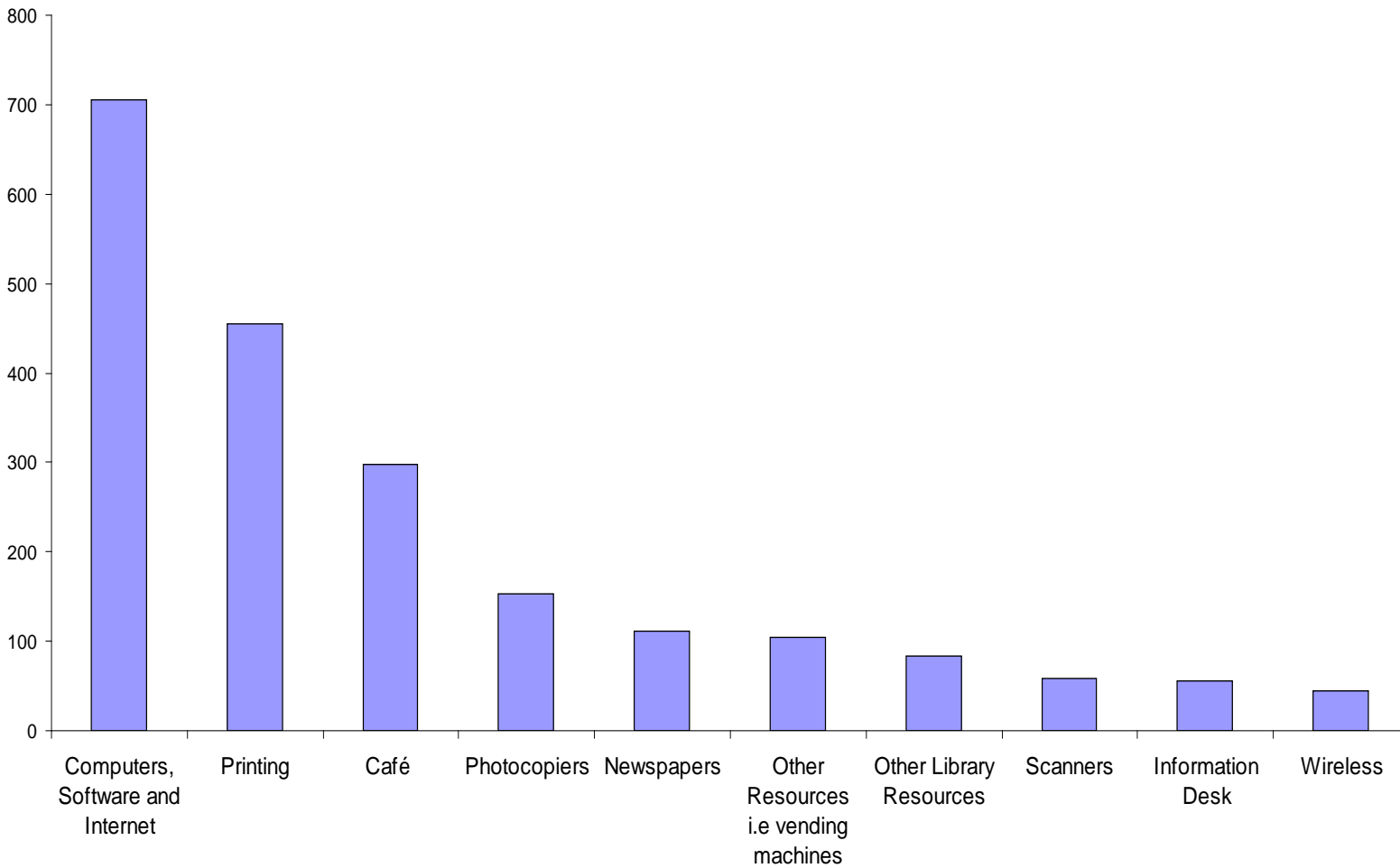
SURVEY

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

Other Activities the Common is Used For

SURVEY

How do you think learning & studying using the Information Common has affected your assessments & quality of assignments?

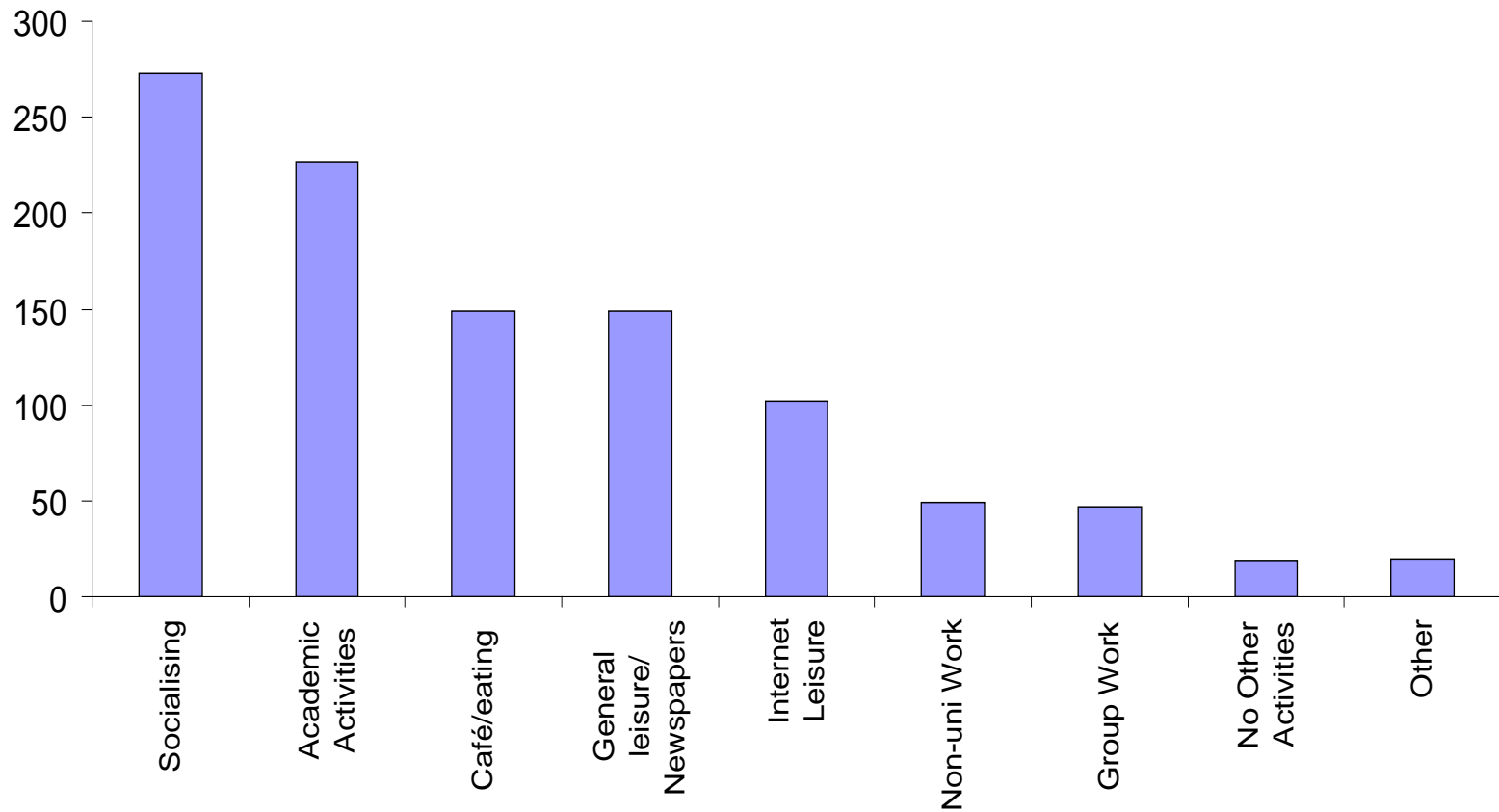**Aspects Information Common Positively Affecting Performance**
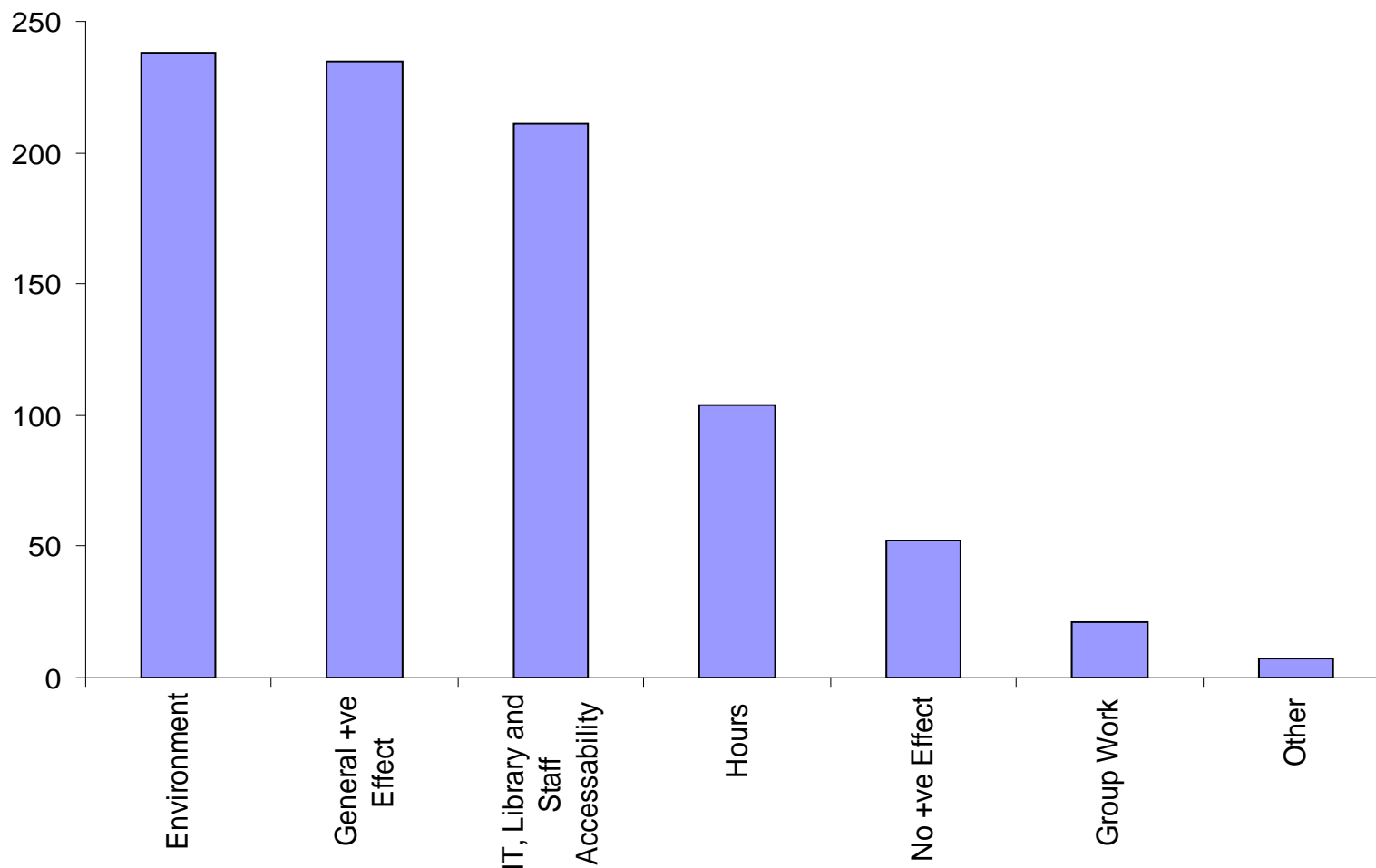
SURVEY

- "Improved - gives a fun place to study"

- "Staff always available to help out. With anything."

- "Allows use of faster internet resources"

- "Amazing, easy info and access to help"

- "Its provided 24 hour access to a computer with internet access and printing facilities"

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

SURVEY

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

Aspects of Information Common Contributing to Collaborative Work and Learning
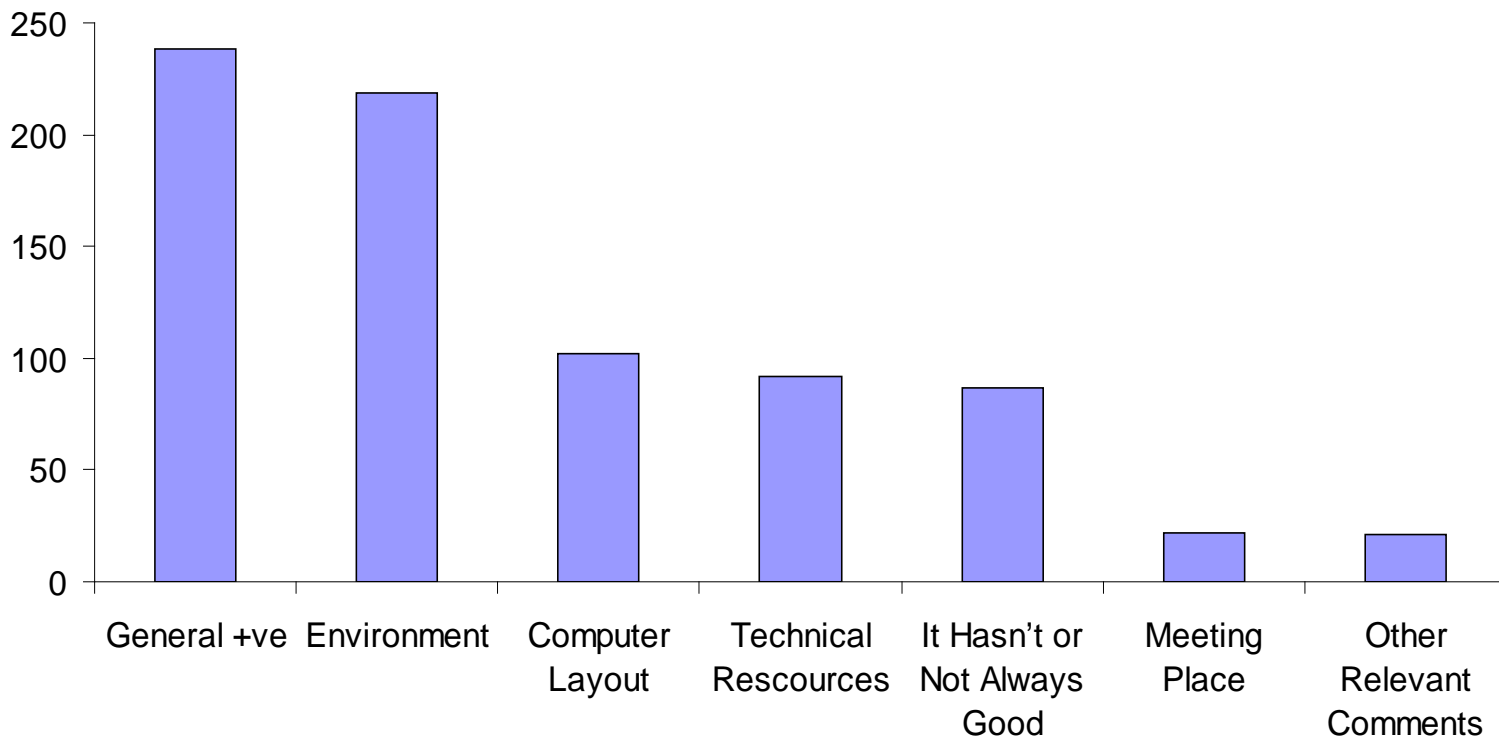
SURVEY

"Make working in a group easier"

"It's a very good place which tolerates talking, very good collaborative environment"

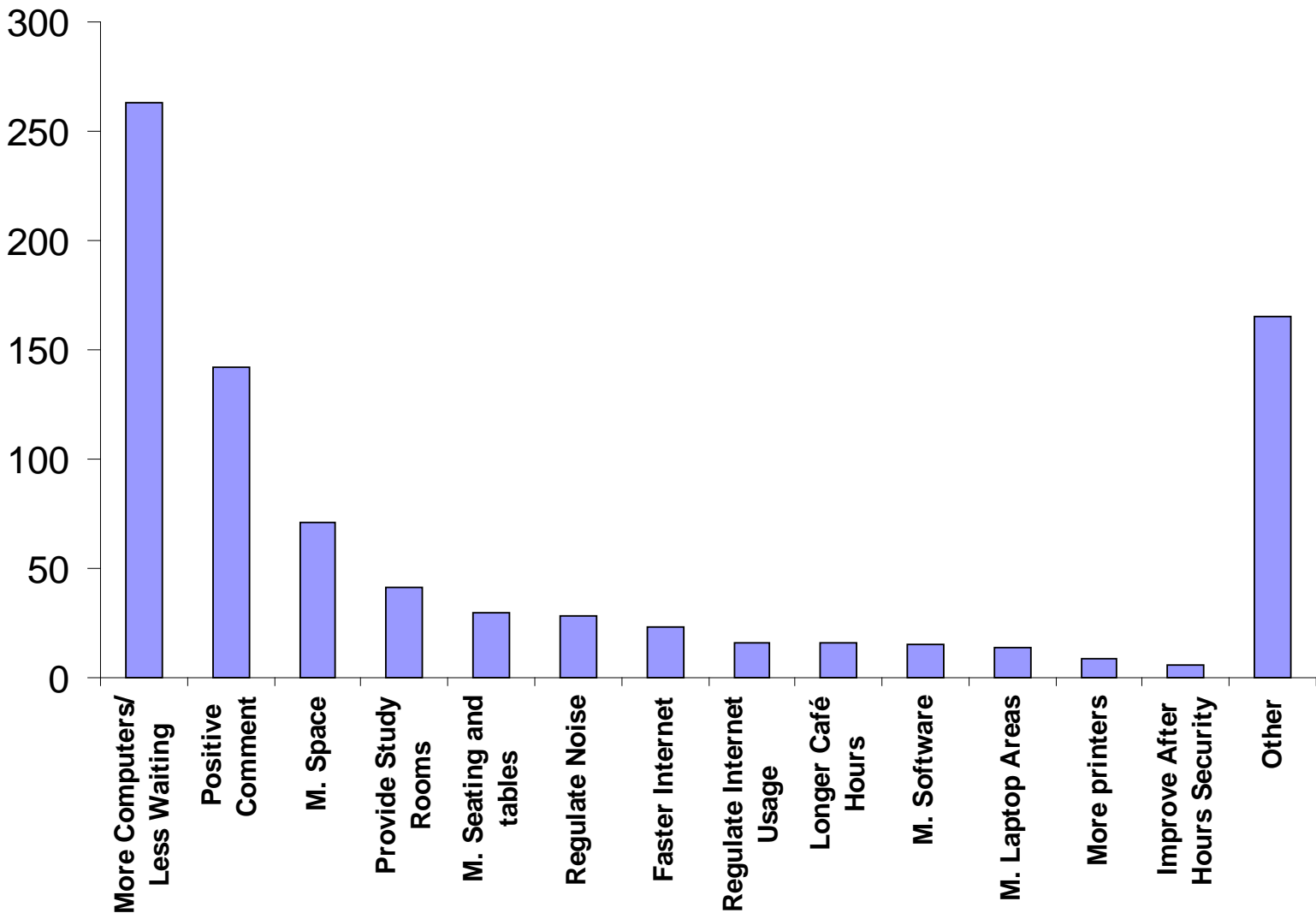"Couple of friends can sit together with computer and doing assignments"

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

"The layout limits the potential for effective group work - lounges along side wall are the only suitable area"

SURVEY

How the Information Common Could Provide Greater Support to Student Learning

"More computers! At peak times the wait can be long"

"Faster internet and more computers"

"Providing enclosed breakout rooms"

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

"Have signs asking people to keep noise to a minimum"

"Hammocks"

SURVEY

- Facilities which support different learning styles
- Client focused service for IT/Library support
- Availability of staff – always there to help
- Informal ambience of an Internet Café - a pleasant place to do work in a community setting
- 24 hour availability

- Vice-Chancellors Citation for Outstanding Contributions for Teaching and Learning (2006)
- Carrick Institute Citation for Outstanding Contributions to Teaching & Learning

AWARDS

- City Hub and Info Common
- Student Academic Hubs

"a campus heart and soul"

Thank You

Questions?

http://www.newcastle.edu.au/service/library/aic/