# Table of Contents

**Sharing Your LibQUAL Data**  
5

**Introduction**  
5  
What is LibQUAL?  
5  
How Will LibQUAL Benefit Your Institution?  
6  
How Will LibQUAL Benefit Your Users?  
6  
The Origin of LibQUAL  
6  
The LibQUAL Team  
7  
LibQUAL Communications  
7  
LibQUAL-L Discussion List  
7  
ARL-ASSESS Discussion List  
7

**Pre-Registration Tasks**  
7  
Develop a Purpose for Participating in LibQUAL  
7  
Determine Your Survey Population and Sample Size  
8  
Obtain IRB Approval  
8  
Data Security  
8  
Obtain Financial Support  
9

**Registration Tasks**  
10  
Consider Your Participation Category  
10  
Consider a Membership Subscription  
11  
Consider Custom Analysis  
11  
Create a User Account  
12  
Registration Process  
12

**Pre-Survey Tasks**  
14  
Familiarize Yourself with the Survey Management Center  
14  
Understand the Structure of the Survey and LibQUAL Lite  
16  
Understand the Technical Issues  
19  
Identify a Data Source for Email Sample(s)  
20

**Conduct Your Survey**  
21  
Pre-launch  
21  
Launch Your Survey  
26  
Close Your Survey  
30
### Post-Survey Tasks

- Post-Survey and Results 30
- Download Your Survey Results 31
- Produce Your Radar Charts 33
- Disseminate Your LibQUAL Results 33
- Publish Your LibQUAL Results 34

### Appendices

- Appendix A: Sample IRB Forms 36
- Appendix B: Sample Communications 40
- Appendix C: Sample Survey 44
- Appendix D: Protocol for Translating the LibQUAL Survey Instrument 47
Sharing Your LibQUAL Data

We caution LibQUAL users to be thoughtful about sharing your data with people you do not know well, even if you receive assurances that your data will be reported anonymously. Once you share your data, you have no control over how the data are analyzed and reported with respect to your institution. Moreover, you have no control over how the data are analyzed and reported with respect to the protocol itself.

However, we encourage you to analyze your own data and publish articles reporting your findings, whatever your findings or the positions you take may be. We strongly encourage LibQUAL users to publish articles about their data and/or assessment experiences.

Introduction

What is LibQUAL?

LibQUAL is a survey that libraries use to solicit, track, understand, and act upon users’ opinions of service quality. These services are offered to the library community by the Association of Research Libraries (ARL). The program’s centerpiece is a rigorously tested web-based survey that helps libraries assess and improve library services, change organizational culture, and market the library. The survey instrument measures library users’ minimum, perceived, and desired levels of service quality across three dimensions: Affect of Service, Information Control, and Library as Place. LibQUAL aims to:

• foster a culture of excellence in providing library service;
• help libraries better understand user perceptions of library service quality;
• collect and interpret library user feedback systematically over time;
• provide libraries with comparable assessment information from peer institutions;
• identify best practices in library service; and
• enhance library staff members’ analytical skills for interpreting and acting on data.

Since 2000, more than 1,300 libraries have participated in LibQUAL, including college and university libraries, health sciences libraries, academic law libraries, and public libraries—some through various consortia, others as independent participants. LibQUAL has expanded internationally, with participating
institutions in Africa, Asia, Australia, and Europe. This growing community of participants and its extensive dataset are rich resources for improving library services.

**How Will LibQUAL Benefit Your Institution?**

Library administrators have successfully used LibQUAL survey data to identify best practices, analyze deficits, and effectively allocate resources. Benefits for your institution include:

- institutional data and reports that enable you to assess whether your library services are meeting user expectations;

- aggregate data and reports that allow you to compare your library’s performance with that of peer institutions;

- access to an online library of LibQUAL research articles and other publications; and

- membership in a community interested in developing excellence in library services.

**How Will LibQUAL Benefit Your Users?**

LibQUAL gives your library users a chance to tell you where your services need improvement so you can respond to and better manage their expectations. You can develop services that better meet your users’ expectations by comparing your library’s data with that of peer institutions and examining the practices of those libraries that are evaluated highly by their users.

**The Origin of LibQUAL**

The LibQUAL survey evolved from a conceptual model based on the SERVQUAL instrument, a popular tool for assessing service quality in the private sector. Texas A&M University Libraries and other libraries used modified SERVQUAL instruments for several years; those applications revealed the need for an adapted tool that would serve the particular requirements of libraries. ARL, representing the largest research libraries in North America, partnered with Texas A&M University Libraries to develop, test, and refine LibQUAL.

LibQUAL is a not-for-profit operation. From September 2000 through August 2003, the LibQUAL project was supported in part by a grant from the US Department of Education’s Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE). Presently, participation fees cover operational costs.
The LibQUAL Team

The LibQUAL team provides support and information to current, former, and potential participants, via either email or telephone. Information on current team members is available at: http://libqual.org/about/about_lq/contact_info.

LibQUAL Communications

The libqual@arl.org account is the preferred method for reaching the LibQUAL team. This account is monitored on a daily basis. The team may also be reached by telephone at +1 202-296-2296.

LibQUAL-L Discussion List

The LibQUAL-L discussion list is a private, moderated forum for current and former participants. It is a forum to share information, post questions, and solicit feedback.

The LibQUAL team posts important announcements and reminders for participants. All new users are automatically subscribed to the LibQUAL-L discussion list.

List Archive

List subscribers also have access to the list archive, which is available at http://listserv.tamu.edu/archives/libqual-l.html.

ARL-ASSESS Discussion List

The ARL-ASSESS discussion list is a public list for assessment librarians or others interested in discussing and learning about issues related to service quality and/or assessment in libraries.

To subscribe, please visit https://groups.google.com/a/arl.org/group/arl-assess/subscribe.

Pre-Registration Tasks

Develop a Purpose for Participating in LibQUAL

Institutions have participated in LibQUAL to gain a better understanding of users’ expectations, desires, and perceptions of library services. Institutions use data to identify library services strengths and areas that require improvement. The information gained from analysis of survey results is used in strategic planning processes to make certain that library services are aligned with user expectations.
**Determine Your Survey Population and Sample Size**

Some institutions have chosen to survey all user groups at their institution, while others have surveyed only a particular user group. Once settled on a population, you must decide the sample size. A survey of your entire population will not necessarily provide more useful information than a random sample, although a population survey is theoretically preferable to drawing a sample. For more information on sample size, see the section “Identify a Data Source for Email Samples.”

**Obtain IRB Approval**

It is important to contact your Institutional Review Board (also known as the “Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects,” or the “Committee for Human Subjects Research,” or the “Office of Sponsored Programs”) to determine if prior approval is needed to conduct the LibQUAL survey at your institution. Be sure to inform your IRB that results of the survey will be shared among participating institutions and provide them with information about any incentives that you may offer to survey respondents. IRB approval is handled entirely at the local level. LibQUAL does not need to be informed about your local policy requirements and does not require proof of your institution's IRB status.

Your IRB committee may meet infrequently throughout the year, so this step should be initiated well in advance of your projected survey launch date.

For an example of an IRB approval request, see Appendix A: Sample IRB Forms.

**Data Security**

**LibQUAL Survey Data**

The LibQUAL survey is anonymous. The survey collects information on users’ perceptions of library service quality. Because this is a web-based survey, respondents consent to participate by electing to fill out the survey questionnaire. Participating institutions are responsible for providing an explanation of the survey and information pertaining to its confidentiality.

**Data Storage**

Survey data is stored on secure servers located at a private hosting facility. Access to the data is limited to ARL staff and authorized staff of the participating institution. Data is stored indefinitely, with the exception of email and IP addresses.

**Email Addresses**

Email addresses are an optional question on the survey. ARL’s policy and practice is to purge incentive emails from the database six months after the close of each
survey session (December for institutions running a survey in the spring of the same year, and June for institutions running in the fall of the previous year).

**IP Addresses**
The survey captures respondents’ public IP address. IP addresses are purged from the database on the same schedule as the email addresses.

**Demographic Data**
Institutions may choose to include demographic questions on their survey. Demographic items include: age question (response options: Under 18, 18–22, 23–30, 31–45, 46–65, and Over 65); sex question (response options: Male, Female); and full-time/part-time question (response options: Full-time student, Part-time student, Does not apply/NA). Including these demographic questions on the survey is optional.

**Confidentiality**
The Association of Research Libraries recognizes the vital role of their respondent’s information. Primary data gathered by ARL from human subjects is kept strictly confidential and used for statistical purposes only. Published statistics are released in a way that is designed to prevent identification of individuals.

**More Information**
https://www.libqual.org/resources/irb
http://www.libqual.org/resources/human_subjects

**Obtain Financial Support**
You need to ensure that your institution has secured funding for participating in LibQUAL. The registration fee and additional fees for LibQUAL services for the coming year can be found online at: http://libqual.org/about/about_lq/fee_schedule.

**The LibQUAL In-Kind Grant Program**
The LibQUAL In-Kind Grant Program awards one institution with funding to participate in the LibQUAL survey during a given year. The selection of LibQUAL grantees is based on financial need, contribution to the growth of LibQUAL, and improvements in local services and quality.

For more information on the LibQUAL In-Kind Grant Program, please visit http://libqual.org/about/about_lq/in_kind_grant. The deadline for submission is the end of February. Applications are reviewed and evaluated by the ARL Research & Analytics team.
**LSTA Grants and Other External Funding**

Some institutions have received US Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grants to participate in LibQUAL. LSTA is a state-based grant program provided through the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) annually with funds appropriated by Congress.

For more information on LSTA grants, see the IMLS website at [https://www.imls.gov/grants/grant-programs/grants-states](https://www.imls.gov/grants/grant-programs/grants-states).

**Local Support**

You may consider building the LibQUAL participation fee into your annual operating budget or pursuing special projects funding from your institution.

**Registration Tasks**

**Consider Your Participation Category**

**Individual Participation**

An individual participant is a single institution with single or multiple library branches. Each registration constitutes a separate unit of analysis. If a library wishes to distinguish its findings by requesting separate handling and deliverables for their branch libraries, then a separate fee and registration will be required for each distinct library that participates.

**Consortium Participation**

LibQUAL has been greatly enhanced through consortium participation. Consortium participants have included the Association of Academic Health Sciences Libraries (AAHSL); NY3Rs (academic and public libraries in New York state); the European Business School Librarians Group (EBSLG); the Oberlin Group; OhioLINK; the Society of College, National & University Libraries (SCONUL) in the United Kingdom; and several more. For a complete list of consortium participants, see [https://www.libqual.org/about/about_survey/consortia](https://www.libqual.org/about/about_survey/consortia).

Consortium participants receive added benefits at no additional fee, including:

- Analysis of group data and production of a group results notebook, if your consortium has five or more institutions participating in a calendar year.

- Ability to add five custom questions as a unified group; data from those questions will be included in the group notebook. Additionally, these questions will be pre-set in the customization section of the LibQUAL system for each consortium participant.
Due to the amount of specialized preparation required, interested consortia should contact the LibQUAL team well in advance of registration to discuss participation in an upcoming session.

**International Participation**
The LibQUAL survey has been implemented at libraries in Australia, the Bahamas, Belgium, Canada, China, Cyprus, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, France, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America. The survey has been translated in many languages including: Afrikaans, Chinese, Danish, Dutch, English, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hebrew, Japanese, Norwegian, Spanish, Swedish, and Welsh.

If you are interested in translating the LibQUAL survey, see Appendix D for more information.

**Consider a Membership Subscription**
A LibQUAL Membership Subscription provides expanded access to aggregate LibQUAL data for all participating institutions in all years. (Note that without a membership subscription, institutions will have access to peer data for institutions participating in their same survey year(s).) Institutions can access this data via the Data Repository (for notebooks) and the Analytics module (for interactive analysis, tables, and charts).

The subscription costs $1,000 and can start on any date. Institutions may subscribe at the time of registration or any time following registration. For more information please visit the Membership Subscription section of the services and fees page.

**Consider Custom Analysis**

**Branch Analysis**
The Library Branch Analysis service we offer provides a breakdown of branches that were input for the item “The library you use most often.” Each branch will have a separate results notebook and the structure is similar to the individual results notebook.

**Discipline Analysis**
The Customized Discipline Analysis provides a breakdown of disciplines you will create when you configure your survey. The notebook will be structured similarly to the results notebook.

**User Subgroup Analysis**
The User Subgroup Analysis provides a breakdown of the positions selected by
respondents (e.g., First Year, Professor, etc.). Whereas the regular notebook is separated by the larger group (e.g., Undergraduate, Faculty, etc.), this analysis drills down to the specific position.

**Create a User Account**

If your institution is new to LibQUAL, we will need to create an account for you. Please contact the LibQUAL team at libqual@arl.org to initiate the process.

If your institution has participated in LibQUAL previously or is a member of the Association of Research Libraries, but you personally do not have an account, please contact a colleague with a current account. This person will be able to “invite a new user” on the Manage Users page in the Survey Management Center. An email will be sent to you to initiate the process of creating a new account. If your past coordinators are no longer with your institution, simply contact us at libqual@arl.org and we will set you up.

**Registration Process**

Registration for LibQUAL is available on our website at [https://www.libqual.org/register/survey](https://www.libqual.org/register/survey). Registration for the current calendar year is open until mid-November (note that the annual survey cycle typically closes around December 10). Registration for the next calendar year opens each August.

The following steps are involved in the LibQUAL registration process. You may go back and forward through the registration process at any point by clicking “Previous” or “Next.” Please complete each step to register for your survey.

**Step 1: Select a Survey**
Select the year in which you wish to participate.

**Step 2: Select Additional Reports**
Select the custom analysis reports you would like to order. Simply click “Next” if you do not want to order any at the time of registration. If you would like to place an order at a later date, please email libqual@arl.org when you are ready to order.

**Step 3: Add a Subscription**
Indicate whether you would like to add a Membership Subscription to your registration.

**Step 4: Select an Institution and Primary Contact**
Select the institution for which the survey will be conducted and which of the current, active users will serve as the survey’s primary contact.
**Step 5: Select a Consortium**
If your institution belongs to a consortium in LibQUAL, please select the consortium from the list provided. Otherwise, select “N/A”. See Consortium Participation for more details.

**Step 6: Select an Institution Type**
Select your library’s institution type. If your institution has participated in the past, the previous type will be pre-selected by default.

**Step 7: Select Languages**
A list of languages available for your institution type will be displayed. Each will have a link for you to preview the translated survey. Select the language(s) in which you would like to offer the survey.

IMPORTANT: Not all languages are compatible with one another. Send an email to libqual@arl.org if you have questions. If your institution has participated in the past, the previous languages will be pre-selected by default.

**Step 8: Contact Information**
Verify and update the contact information we have in the system for your account.

**Step 9: Payment**
Select how you wish to pay the registration fee. You may pay at the time of registration by credit card (Visa, MasterCard, or American Express), by check or wire transfer/ACH. An automatically-generated invoice will be emailed to the primary contact upon registration.

The registration fee will be automatically adjusted based on past participation. For more information on our fee structure for periodic participation, please see our fee schedule.

Payment is due within 60 days of registration.

Registering your institution for LibQUAL indicates a financial commitment on your part. Upon registration, you have authorized LibQUAL to charge your institution the participation fee. Refunds will not be issued and participation fees cannot be rolled over to future survey years.

Bulk payment may also be arranged for consortia. Please contact the LibQUAL team at libqual@arl.org in advance of registration to arrange a bulk payment for your group members.

**Step 10: Review Your Registration**
This is your opportunity to review the information you provided. If it is correct, click “Finish.” If you wish to edit the information, click “Previous.”
Please click “Finish” only once. The registration process may take a few minutes. If you click “Finish” more than once, you may be charged multiple times.

**Pre-Survey Tasks**

**Familiarize Yourself with the Survey Management Center**

The Survey Management Center is a secure section of the LibQUAL website and is restricted to users who have a valid account and whose institution is registered to run a survey in the current year. The Management Center enables participants to manage their survey effectively, track their progress during the survey run, and obtain survey results for their institution and other institutions participating in the given year. A brief description of the major sections of the Management Center follows.

You must log into the site using your username (email address) and password via the LibQUAL home page to access the Survey Management Center.

**Register for Surveys**
Register for upcoming LibQUAL survey runs here.

**Register for a Subscription**
Register for a LibQUAL Membership Subscription here.

**Manage Surveys**
This section allows you to manage the survey process. You can set up, preview, monitor, and close your survey. Additionally, you can download print versions of your survey, collect the email addresses for your incentive winners, and complete the Representativeness, Post Hoc, and Evaluation questionnaires. The system will lead you through the stages of administering a survey in sequential order.

For additional information on the “Manage Your Survey” section, see Conduct Your Survey.

**Manage Users**
This area enables you to control access to the Survey Management Center by members of your institution’s staff. You can:

- Edit a user account
- Add a new user account.
- Activate or deactivate a user’s account:
— A deactivated user cannot login to the LibQUAL system. Active settings can only be made by current active users.

**Resources**
The Resources page is a continually expanding area to store LibQUAL member resources, such as norms tables and free downloads to assist in creation of promotional materials. Please visit [http://www.libqual.org/Resources](http://www.libqual.org/Resources) to see what is available.

**Data Repository**
The Data Repository enables you to view your institution’s survey results notebook, data collection summary, representativeness data, Excel data file, data keys, SPSS syntax files, and survey comments. There are also instructions for creating your own SPSS data files.

All past years of LibQUAL survey runs by your institution, as well as those of other participants, are stored in the Data Repository. You only have access to the notebooks and summary data (not to raw data or comments) of other institutions during the years of your institution’s participation. Access to every year is available through a subscription service (contact libqual@arl.org for more information on setting up a LibQUAL subscription).

For additional information, see [Download Your Survey Results](#).

**Organization Website**
Submit your institution’s LibQUAL-related website here. It will be included in your institution’s entry in the directory.

**Directory**
This section permits you to search the LibQUAL community by individual, institution, or survey year. The directory has a variety of search criteria to help you identify institutions that are similar to yours and useful contact information if you want to get in touch with those institutions. Be sure to click “Show Advanced Criteria” for more options.
Understand the Structure of the Survey and LibQUAL Lite

The LibQUAL survey has evolved from a protocol consisting of “22 items and a box.” Beginning in 2010, it is also available as LibQUAL Lite, a shortened version that randomly presents 8 of the 22 core items. For more information, see the LibQUAL Lite section. A description of each section of the survey follows.

Core Items: “22 items...”
The 22 core survey items measure user perceptions of service quality in three dimensions: Affect of Service, Information Control, and Library as Place. To ensure the validity of the responses, each dimension is assessed through a variety of questions. Users may notice some redundancy in the questions. This is necessary to ensure a sound and valid survey instrument.
**Additional Items**
The survey contains additional items that address information literacy/outcomes (5 questions) and general satisfaction (3 questions). LibQUAL Lite offers a randomized selection for the information literacy/outcomes and satisfaction sections. The survey also includes three questions on use of libraries and search gateways.

### Comments: “...and a box.”
At the end of the survey form, there is a box for open-ended comments. These comments provide a wealth of information for qualitative analysis. You can access your comments while your survey is running. These comments are an integral part of LibQUAL; historically, about 40% of respondents provide comments.

### Email Address for Incentive Prize
If you are offering a local incentive prize, the survey will include a field in which respondents can enter their email addresses in order to enter the prize drawing.

### Local Questions
You may choose to add five local questions to your survey from a list of more than 200 optional questions provided by the LibQUAL system. If you choose this option, those five items will be integrated into the 22 core items on your survey form for a total of 27 items in the core. The Lite protocol randomly selects one out of five for each survey instance, for a total of 9 items in the core.

To view a current list of local questions, contact the LibQUAL team at libqual@arl.org. For more information on local questions, see Configure Your Survey.
**Demographic Items**
Your survey form will also include demographic items such as the library used most often, age, sex, discipline, and position. Demographic items will appear in drop-down menu form on your survey.

Demographic items differ according to your institution type.

**Position**
The “Position” item asks your users to identify their status at your institution (e.g., undergraduate for college or university types or part-time student for community colleges). This item plays a critical role in shaping the layout of your LibQUAL results notebook.

**LibQUAL Lite**
The LibQUAL Lite protocol uses item sampling methods to gather data on all 22 LibQUAL core items, while each individual participant responds to only a subset of items. Consequently, survey response times are roughly cut in half, while the participating institution still receives data on every survey question.

The Lite survey is a customization—Institutions can select anywhere from 0 to 100% Lite for their respondents. For more information on setting your “Lite percentage,” see [Configure Your Survey](#).

Each respondent completes only 8 of the 22 core survey items. Every participant will see the same three core questions (one in each dimension), plus two randomly-selected Information Control questions, two randomly-selected Affect of Service questions, and one randomly-selected Library as Place question.

The local optional questions, outcomes, and satisfaction sections are also reduced in a similar fashion. Respondents are asked to submit the same demographic data and they will have the option of providing comments. For more details on the LibQUAL Lite survey construction, please contact [libqual@arl.org](mailto:libqual@arl.org) or check related
Understand the Technical Issues

Technical Assistance
Institutions are responsible for providing their own local technical assistance for the survey for issues that can be resolved locally.

The behind-the-scenes programming has been written for maximum efficiency, stability, and compatibility, and the survey does not rely on erratically supported features such as JavaScript or cookies.

On rare occasions, respondents have encountered problems with the web survey. The causes of these problems varied (i.e., proxy server connections, firewalls, browser caching) and most can be resolved locally through contact with your local network administrator. Others can be attributed to the idiosyncratic nature of the web itself, and do not reoccur.

A few of these problems may require intervention from the LibQUAL team. In those cases where these problems cannot be resolved locally, we welcome your direct contact at libqual@arl.org.

Survey Response Time and Response Rates
A typical response time for the completion of the 22 core question, 3-scale version of the survey is about ten minutes. A typical response time for the completion of the LibQUAL lite survey form is about five minutes.

Research indicates that web-based surveys typically have low response rates (around 15 to 20 percent). The LibQUAL team works with libraries that have reported particularly high response rates in order to gather information on best practices that can be shared with all participants. Libraries that achieve response rates above 30 percent are considered libraries with high response rates for a web-based survey.

Americans with Disabilities Act Compatibility
In order for the LibQUAL survey to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, participants should be prepared to make special arrangements for any respondents with disabilities. The survey form is JAWS compatible, though the LibQUAL team is researching ADA compliance for improvements to the survey’s interaction with the reader software and is in development of an optimized form.

for mobile devices.

Data Archiving
LibQUAL is the official data archive. LibQUAL participants have access to their results (including notebooks, Excel files, and user comments) via the LibQUAL website.

Identify a Data Source for Email Sample(s)

Where to Locate a Data Source
A good source of valid email addresses may be your campus or institutional computing office, administrative records, or library patron database. You may survey the entire population or draw a random sample.

Random Sampling
A survey of your entire population will not necessarily provide more useful information than a random sample, although a population survey is theoretically preferable to drawing a sample. The primary contact should work on determining the sample sizes based on the population segments you want to generalize. This person needs to confirm the email addresses are drawn from the appropriate database and double-check the random sample to be sure that it is drawn from the population of interest. It is helpful to over sample in case some email addresses are invalid. For example, instead of sampling 900 undergraduate email addresses, start with 1,200 and use the extra 300 email addresses to fill in as needed, as “undeliverable mail” comes back.

Each library is responsible for selecting their sample and sending email messages to their sample population. In general, because “total market surveys” such as SERVQUAL and LibQUAL sample both users and nonusers, sampling from a database other than the library patron database is recommended. In this case, the primary contact should work with someone in the academic computing, human resources, or information systems departments for help in obtaining institution-wide random samples of your population types.

The integrity of the email database will determine the quality of the sample.

You should contact your IT team early in the survey process to determine if the separation of sample groups is possible and to find out how much time is needed for them to create those groups. For colleges and universities, for example, drawing random samples separate for faculty, graduate students, and undergraduates is recommended.

When creating the list of email addresses, carefully consider your local circumstances and develop a process that works for you in your local environment. For example, if you plan to survey faculty every year, you might want to draw two
different, non-overlapping samples the first year and use those two samples in each respective year of the survey administration.

**Sample Size**
We recommend that you draw at least 1,200 random email addresses for each population segment of interest. We recommended 900 undergraduates, 600 graduate students, and 600 faculty members for college and university libraries as a minimum. You do not have to restrict your sample to these minimum requirements. Larger samples give you better estimates for subgroup analysis. If you want to generalize to other population segments, e.g., by disciplines, to get a better understanding of the dynamics of the different user groups within your institution, you should draw larger random samples and even target the population segments within the different disciplines. For other types of libraries, 1,200 randomly selected respondents should be adequate to provide useful estimates for the population segment that is of interest.

The LibQUAL notebooks for college and university libraries report summary data and show representativeness graphs for faculty, graduate students, and undergraduates.

If your population size is less than 1,200, we recommend surveying your whole population. A drawback of surveying large numbers from your population year after year is survey fatigue. So, consider marketing the survey carefully and aggressively to the random sample or the population you are surveying.

When selecting a sample population from more specific groups at your institution, please keep notes about your sampling method. You will be asked to describe your sampling method in the Post Hoc Questionnaire.

**Conduct Your Survey**

There are four distinct stages in conducting your survey: “Pre-launch,” “Monitor Survey Progress,” “Close My Survey,” and “Post-Survey and Results.” You cannot advance to the next stage in the process until you have completed the tasks within. Upon moving to the next stage, you are not able to return to prior stages.

**Pre-launch**

**Configure Your Survey**
The workspace for the first part of “Stage 1) Pre-Launch” is the window located underneath “Configure Your Survey” that contains six tabs: Permissions, Customization, Optional Questions, Position Options, Branch Library Options, and Discipline Options. Click “Save” whenever you make an update you want to keep.
Permissions

• Set the permissions for your current survey run. Select the users who will have full permission to customize, launch, monitor, and close your survey.

• All other users will have “view only” access.

• Add new users via the Manager Users link in the survey management center.

Customization

• Survey Title

• Choose a label to display at the top of your survey. This label should be no more than 60 characters long.

• Upload Your Institution’s Logo

  — Your institution’s logo will appear at the top of your survey form to help brand your survey. To ensure image quality, the following criteria are recommended:

  • The image should be similar in color and design to the images available on your institution’s library website and must be in GIF, JPG, or PNG format.

  • The image size must be 915 x 200 pixels or smaller.

  • The file size must be less than 200 kB.

• Support Email Address

  — This email address will appear on your survey form as the first point of contact for respondents who have questions or concerns about your survey. We recommend that you set up a special email account to address these questions and concerns. Choose an email address that is personal and recognizable to users, if possible.

• Lite-View Percentage

  — Please enter the percentage of patrons who should receive the shortened “Lite” survey form randomly. This can be any number between 0 and 100. Zero means all respondents will receive the long survey. One hundred means all respondents will see the Lite survey.

• Incentives

  — You must indicate whether your institution will offer incentives to
respondents. Some institutions are prohibited from participating in this type of drawing; please be sure to check with your Institutional Review Board (for more information, see Obtain IRB Approval) before responding to this question if you are going through an IRB process.

• Survey start and end dates

  — Indicate the dates you intend to open and close the survey at your institution. Note that these dates are for our information only and are not binding. You must manually open and close your survey. We recommend that you keep your survey open for at least three weeks.

• Reporting language

  — Choose the language to be used in your notebook and other reports. This is the language for the question used in the survey (please note that the general descriptive information in the notebook is provided in English).

Optional Questions
Use this tab to add up to five extra questions to your survey. Questions may be selected from the existing list or you may submit a new question. New questions must be submitted in triple-Likert format; please allow two weeks for submitted questions to be added to the database.

The optional questions list contains only the questions available in ALL the languages in which you are offering your survey. The five optional questions will be interspersed within the core questions on the survey.

Position Options
This tab enables you to customize the position/user group terms for the demographics portion of your survey. There are two types of position terms: “Parent Options”—the broader categories used to organize the response options and correspond to the sections in your Results Notebook, and “Options”—the response options that users will select. You must have at least one response option for each parent category.

Enter the desired text in the box on the left column and map to the reporting value (for peer comparison purposes) in the right column.
These options will be used to analyze the representativeness of your sample, so we recommend choosing categories that align with your institution's population data.

**Branch Libraries**

In this tab, you can specify the options from which users will choose their response to the question, “The library that you use most often.” If you do not want to include this question on your survey (e.g., if your institution has only one library), leave the form empty.

If you enter options, the question will be included in the demographics section of the survey. Responses to this question will be returned to you as part of your survey data file and will be reported on a minimal basis in your results notebook. You
can order a special branch libraries notebook for a fee for a more detailed analysis by branch.

The libraries added will appear in alphabetical order. To see how the question will appear on the survey in each of your languages, click the links below the form.

**Discipline Options**

This tab enables you to select the discipline terms that you want to use in the demographics section of your survey. The standard discipline terms for each of your survey languages appear below by default. You may choose to use some or all of the LibQUAL standard discipline terms, or you may choose to create your own discipline categories. If you choose to add your own categories, each must be mapped to a LibQUAL standard discipline for data analysis purposes. (Please make sure your new term(s) relate to the standard disciplines; e.g., do not enter “Accounting” and map it to “Architecture”).

The standard disciplines used on the American English version of the survey are adapted from those used by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) for US institutions of higher education, based on the Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP).

Please remember the following:

- Choices will appear in alphabetical order in a drop-down menu for respondents to select the best option that describes them.

- Providing too many options may make the drop-down menu unwieldy, and may make it harder for users to select the option that best fits them.

- You will be asked to indicate the number of users from each discipline category for the Representativeness Questionnaire (for more information, see Monitor Survey Progress).

- We recommend 16 or fewer categories, if possible.

- Include an “Other” or “N/A” option for those users who may not be able to make a viable selection from the other options (i.e., Administrative Staff).

**Preview Your Survey**

At any point during configuration, you may preview the LibQUAL survey as it will appear to users at your institution. This feature allows you to ensure that your survey is correct before it goes live at your institution. You must view and fill out the preview survey in every language in which it is being offered before you will be permitted to launch your survey. When the preview survey is completed, the “open survey” button will activate and the preview survey link will change from red to
green. If you save any changes to configurations after completing a preview, the preview will once again become “incomplete.”

Regardless of your Lite-view percentage, the system requires that you complete a preview of the long version of your survey. This is required so you will have an opportunity to review every possible question any given user may see.

You are strongly encouraged to test your survey in a variety of settings, including accessing it from locations both on and off your campus and using different platforms and browsers. Encourage library staff to test the survey so that they are aware of the survey if users approach them with questions. You can direct staff to the preview by copying the survey URL (right-click the link). Please make sure that library staff realize this is a preview only and should not be distributed. Staff should also know who is responsible for coordinating the survey process at your institution.

The preview survey is for testing purposes only. Data is not collected, saved, or reported to you.

If you encounter problems with your preview survey that your local technical support cannot resolve, report them to the LibQUAL team at libqual@arl.org.

Launch Your Survey

Click the “open survey” button to open your survey and receive your URL(s) for distribution. There will be a separate URL for each language. The button will not be activated until all previews are completed.

Once your survey is launched, no further changes or customizations can be made.

Communicate with Your Users

Announce Your Survey to Your Email Sample(s)

You will need to work with the appropriate people at your institution to draw a final list of email addresses for your sample(s).

Your survey announcement should introduce your users to the upcoming survey. For a sample survey notification, see Appendix B. Examples of effective publicity include:

- Writing ads for your school or local newspaper or office newsletter
- Distributing printed fliers around organization
- Setting table tents on dining hall tables
• Creating ads for campus television stations
• Writing jingles to air on campus radio stations

Based on your feedback from the survey announcement, adjust your email sample groups as needed (i.e., replace invalid email addresses with valid ones).

Send an Invitation to Your Email Sample(s)

Your survey invitation should address the purpose of the study, the issue of confidentiality, how the results will be used, and any incentives offered for participants. Most importantly, it must include the URL to the survey. For a sample survey invitation, see Appendix B: Sample Communications.

Experience has proven that Monday morning is the best time to send out survey communications and Friday afternoon is the least effective.

Some libraries have created web pages to address common questions and problems that users may encounter while taking the survey. The LibQUAL FAQ is available on our website at http://www.libqual.org/about/about_lq/general_faq. You are free to copy and paste information from that page to create your own.

Monitor Survey Progress

In Stage 2 (Monitor Survey Progress), use the tabs to obtain your URL(s) for distribution and to monitor the progress of your survey. There is also a tab where you can view and complete your Representativeness Questionnaire. Be sure to visit the questionnaire early in the survey run to allow enough time to gather the necessary information, as it should be completed before closing your survey.

Please do not confuse your live survey URL with your preview survey URL; one simple way to tell them apart is that the preview survey URL includes the word “preview.”

• URLs
  — **URLs**: The top section on this tab contains a unique survey URL for each of the languages in which you are offering your LibQUAL survey. Distribute these URLs to your respondents. **Do not** access this URL yourself unless you intend to submit a survey yourself. Each click of this link will be recorded in the raw data.
  
  — **Long Form URLs**: These URLs will override the Lite percentage view set during customization. This link should only be distributed to groups you want to receive the long form survey. If you chose 0% Lite, then this has no functional difference from the standard URLs.
  
  — **Test URLs**: These URLs allow you to access the survey in order to safely
test its functionality and appearance without affecting your survey results and statistics.

— **Print Surveys:** The links here are to print-friendly surveys for distributing hard copies. Completed print surveys must be entered into the system manually. Note that you can only enter data for long-form surveys; data entry for the Lite survey is not supported. See the [print survey section](#) below for more information.

The next four tabs contain continuously updating tables that will help you monitor the progress of your survey. To update with the latest data while you have a tab open, select the button labeled “Refresh Data” below each table.

- **Summary:** Contains data on user views and scores, broken down by long and Lite survey versions
- **By Date:** Contains counts of valid surveys by date
- **By Hour:** Contains counts of valid surveys by hour of the day
- **By User Group:** Contains counts of valid surveys separated in the demographic sections of branch libraries, sex, age, discipline, and position, and broken down by the variables in each of these categories
- **Comments:** To page through your comments, click the appropriate icon. If you wish to download the comments in a spreadsheet format with associated demographic data, select the “CSV format” link at the top of the tab.

- **Representativeness:** Click the link in this tab to view and complete your representativeness questionnaire.

  — You are asked to complete this form in Stage 2, as your configurations in Stage 1 help determine the fields within the questionnaire. The questionnaire will be available through stages 2, 3, and 4. When your survey is closed, please mark the “I acknowledge that my representativeness questionnaire is complete” option; this gives staff the go-ahead to run your results report.

  — This questionnaire is optional. If you do not wish to fill it out, please mark the “I acknowledge that my representativeness questionnaire is left blank intentionally” option.

  — The data that you provide will be used to determine the representativeness of your survey sample once the survey is completed. That analysis will only be as accurate as the information that you provide, so please be thorough when filling out the representativeness questionnaire. If you need definitions for the library statistics, please contact [libqual@arl.org](mailto:libqual@arl.org).
**Complete vs. Valid Surveys**

As you are monitoring submissions, you will notice that the system counts both “complete” and “valid” surveys. We have implemented a screening process to determine which respondents to omit from analysis. All data will be collected and given to you in an Excel spreadsheet with SPSS syntax files, but only a survey that meets the following criteria will be labeled as valid in the dataset and included in the results notebook.

**Complete**: all questions were answered, except the few items that are not required. The nonrequired items are “the branch you use most often,” the comments box, and the respondent’s email address (for the incentive prize).

**Valid** surveys meet the following criteria:

1. All 22 core items (8 for the Lite version) have a response, and a user group was selected.
2. There are not too many N/A responses: fewer than 12 for the long version or 5 for the Lite version.
3. There are not too many logical inconsistencies: fewer than 10 questions (4 for the Lite version) have responses where the minimum rating is higher than the desired rating.

One appealing feature of our “gap measurement model” is that the rating format provides a check for inconsistencies (i.e., score inversions in the response data). Logically, for example, on a given item the “minimum” rating should not be higher than the “desired” rating on the same item.

Only valid surveys are included in the results notebook and in the data in the Analytics module. Obviously, a survey can be complete but not valid. It is also possible for a survey to meet the validity criteria but not be marked complete—if, for example, a participant did not answer one of the satisfaction, outcomes, or demographic questions.

**Make Print Surveys Available to Users**

Print surveys should be used only when a patron is unable or unwilling to complete the survey online. All paper surveys collected by you must be manually entered into the online survey form by the survey liaison or another local person. LibQUAL does not collect paper surveys. Print survey data can only be entered during the time that your survey is open. Once your survey has closed, print survey data can no longer be entered.

We recommend that all print surveys be coded (numbered consecutively), in order for you to track the number of print surveys that are distributed and returned. A
good source of information about print survey protocol is *The Survey Kit*, edited by Arlene Fink. The procedure for print surveys also preserves the confidentiality of the respondent. The paper copy bears no name or information that would identify the respondent once the results are processed. You have an obligation not to release any information about the participants without the respondent’s permission. Even if an email address were provided on the printed form, it would be nearly impossible to match that electronic address with the individual’s survey responses once they have been entered into the web form.

To assure the respondents of confidentiality, set up a drop box in the library to collect completed print survey forms for those who prefer not to return the survey by mail. Having these two options for returning surveys will help the response/return rate. If your library offers the option to mail in the survey, the completed survey should be returned to the library and respondents should include in the address, “Attention: LibQUAL Survey.” Doing so will ensure that when the form is mailed back to the library it will be routed to the correct person.

**Send Survey Reminders**
Research indicates that the number of contacts is the single highest predictor of the response rate for a web-based survey. Therefore, plan to send at least three to five notices to your sample population, and remember to thank them in your follow-up reminders in case they have already completed the survey.

**Close Your Survey**
In stage 3, you will manually close your survey by clicking the “Close My Survey” button.

**Warning:** You cannot reverse this step. Once the survey has been closed your incentive winner list is produced and no further survey responses can be submitted.

**Post-Survey Tasks**

**Post-Survey and Results**
Stage 4 is your portal to post-survey tasks and results. The representativeness questionnaire is there for you to complete data entry, if needed, and acknowledge its final progress (either marking that the questionnaire is complete or intentionally blank). The post hoc and evaluation questionnaires are also available. The post hoc questionnaire provides the LibQUAL team with information about the survey at your institution (e.g., sample size, number of emails sent, number

---

of invalid email addresses, incentives offered, and marketing techniques). Post hoc data are useful to us for understanding your survey process. The evaluation questionnaire provides you the opportunity to provide feedback and evaluate your institution’s experience with the survey process. All survey liaisons and assistants are encouraged to complete the evaluation.

As for results, you can view and download comments from respondents, incentive winners, raw data in CSV format, the keys for variable names and option IDs, and the SPSS syntax file. If your institution is offering local incentives, a randomly selected list of 50 respondent email addresses will be available in this section once you have closed your survey. (The full list is also available as a download at the top of your list of 50.)

A link to a print version of your survey will also be available for archival purposes.

**Download Your Survey Results**

You will forever have access to your survey results through the data repository, which houses user comments, survey results notebooks, Excel data files, and other tools.

In addition to your own data, you have access to institutional notebooks for all participants running in your same survey year. You are encouraged to share what you have learned and how you are using your survey data via the LIBQUAL-L@listserv.tamu.edu discussion list, as well as local websites.

The survey results should not be seen as a measure of comparison of one library’s performance versus another’s, but rather as a means to compare perceptions of service delivery against expectations. LibQUAL helps establish a dialogue among libraries, out of which a set of best practices for library service is emerging.

**Notebooks**

Results notebooks are provided as Adobe PDF files. The user groups specific to your type of institution divide the various notebook sections.

Consortium members will receive individual results notebooks for their institution and an aggregate results notebook for the group (when five or more institutions in a consortium are participating). Each year, we produce a consortium notebook that includes all participating ARL members.

Professionally printed copies of the results notebooks are available for purchase from LibQUAL for an additional fee. For more information on LibQUAL services and fees, see: http://libqual.org/about/about_lq/fee_schedule.
**Raw Data Files**
You will also receive access to your complete raw survey data in Excel format. All records—partial, invalid, and completed—are included in this file, which may be downloaded from the Data Repository. Data syntax definitions are below.

For `xxx_mn`, `xxx_pr`, and `xxx_de` fields:

- Score of 1–9: Normal range of possible responses
- Score of -1: Indicates no response was given for this question component
- Field left blank: Indicates question was not asked (Lite protocol)

For `xxx_na` fields:

- Score of -1: Question was presented but no response was given to any of its parts
- Score of 0: One or more of the question’s components was answered. N/A box was not checked.
- Score of 1: N/A box was checked. In this instance, all other question components are marked as if no response was given (-1 for perceived, minimum, and desired items, -99 for computed components).
- Field left blank: Indicates question was not asked (Lite protocol)

For `xxx_ad`, `xxx_su` fields:

- Score of -8 to 8: Normal range of possible scores based on question component responses
- Score of -99: Indicates that a score was not able to be computed since one or more of the required components was left blank
- Field left blank: Indicates question was not asked (Lite protocol)

**SPSS Data Files**
The SPSS data file production process is available through the data repository. You will have to download your Excel file and apply an SPSS syntax file that will be available to you through the data repository to produce the .sav file. This way you can have the SPSS data file as soon as you close your survey. Please note that if you apply the syntax ‘active eq 1,’ then the SPSS data file contains only those cases that are valid and are included in your notebook.


Comments
You have real-time access to the comments provided by respondents in the comments box on your LibQUAL survey during stage 2, “Monitor Survey Progress.” Basic demographic information such as user group, age, sex, and library branch (if available) is provided with each comment. Comments are also tagged with a unique identification number that enables you to link each comment to the individual’s survey response.

Comments are not visible to other institutions participating in LibQUAL; only your institution has access to your comments.

Norms
In widely applicable standardized instruments, norms are typically calculated only once every five to ten years. Norms can be useful in library service quality benchmarking. Normative data for LibQUAL are no longer calculated for each session or year because the LibQUAL norms are remarkably stable over languages and years. In other words, you can use existing norms to compare and benchmark your results with that of other institutions.

For historical data, download the LibQUAL Highlights from all past years in the publications section of the website.

Produce Your Radar Charts
The LibQUAL Team has developed an Excel file template where you can insert your own data values to produce customized radar charts. The template is available online on the Resources page.

A guide is also available on the Resources page that describes how to use Excel to create your own graphs, “Charting LibQUAL+® Data” by Jeff Stark, Training and Development Services, Texas A&M University Libraries, Texas A&M University (March 2004).

Disseminate Your LibQUAL Results
You may share your data within your institution in any way you see fit to promote and improve library services. Some institutions have created pages on their websites as a means of sharing their survey results with their community, while others have published articles in their institutional newspaper or magazine.

You should not use other libraries’ data in any way that would compromise or harm the reputation of other institutions. You may use peer institutions’ data in a confidential manner without disclosing their identity in order to compare your results to identify best practices and emulate methods of meeting user expectations and managing user perceptions. Be mindful that user perceptions and attitudes can change rapidly, as a result, local circumstances and rank ordering is not useful in this context. LibQUAL attempts to serve as a tool for local diagnostic purposes and cross-institutional comparisons to help institutions learn from one another.

LibQUAL is just one of many methods that an institution may adopt in evaluating their services regularly and systematically to ensure that they are meeting the needs of their users. LibQUAL will continue to offer opportunities for libraries to share their experiences and data usage so that libraries can learn how to meet user expectations and identify best practices in the area of managing user perceptions.

**Publish Your LibQUAL Results**

We encourage you to analyze and publish your findings. If you choose to publish articles using data collected via LibQUAL, we advise you to sign non-exclusive agreements that include the following statement:

“The authors grant the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) the non-exclusive right to reproduce, distribute, post on the web, and disseminate for educational use any articles published in scholarly and other commercial journals as long as the source, author, issue, and page numbers are acknowledged.”

This allows LibQUAL to disseminate results and research literature related to LibQUAL more effectively.

**Publish Your LibQUAL Results on Your Local Website**

If you wish to make your LibQUAL results publicly available by posting them on an institutional website, you should acknowledge the role of LibQUAL in their production by including the following statement:

“This report was produced by LibQUAL for [library name]. LibQUAL is a suite of services that libraries use to solicit, track, understand, and act upon users’ opinions of service quality. These services are offered to the library community by the Association of Research Libraries (ARL). For more information, visit [http://www.libqual.org](http://www.libqual.org).”
**Evaluating the Integrity of Your Data**

When you receive your data file, you can evaluate the integrity or trustworthiness of library service quality assessment data in your context. In other words, you may conduct what is known as (a) score reliability and (b) score validity analysis. This analysis is presented in an accessible manner in the Thompson, Kyrillidou, and Cook article accepted for presentation at the 2006 Library Assessment Conference. The article demonstrates how to use SPSS software to compute the related statistics. LibQUAL data are used in heuristic examples, to make the discussion concrete, but the illustrations apply to both new and other measures of library service quality.

---

Appendices

Appendix A: Sample IRB Forms
Used By: Texas A&M University in 2001

Texas A&M University
Form 1
Summary Cover Sheet
Protocol for Human Subjects in Research

Please check off or provide details on the following (enter NA if not applicable): ☑ Exemption Requested
See Page 2

Principal Investigator Name: Fred M. Heath  Faculty ☑ Graduate Student ☐
College/Dept: Texas A&M General Libraries  Mail Stop 5000  Phone 845-8111
Project Title: Association of Research Libraries LibQUAL+ Project: Service Quality Measures
Subjective Estimate of Risk to Subject: ☑ Low ☐ Moderate ☐ High ☐ None
Gender of subjects: ☐ Male ☐ Female ☑ Both ☑ Age(s): 18-75 ☑ Total Participants (est.): 10,000
Source of Subjects:
☒ Other Psychology Subject Pool ☐ Other TAMU Students ☐ Community
☒ Posted Notice* ☒ Other
☒ Prisons ☒ Other (Specify/Secondary data from participating universities)

Compensation***: Yes ☐ No ☑
Deception?: Yes ☐ No ☑
Location of Experiment/Participating universities:

Invasive or Sensitive Procedures: ☑ Yes ☐ No ☐
☒ Blinded Samples ☐ urine Samples ☐ Stress Exercise (electrodes, etc.)
☒ Psychological Inventory ☒ Other (Specify)
☒ DNA

Sensitive Subject Matter: ☐ Yes ☑ No ☐
☒ Alcohol, Drugs, Sex ☐ Depression/Suicide
☒ Learning Disability ☐ Other (Specifying)

Use of Video or Audio tapes ☐ (please indicate)
☒ Retained ☐ Destroy/Dispose ☑ Yes ☐ No ☑
Retained Length of Time ☐ Destroy/Dispose ☑ Yes ☐ No ☑
Other (explain)
Use specified in consent form? ☑ Yes ☐ No ☑
Use/Access to tapes:

Provisions for Confidentiality/Anonymity
☒ Replies Coded ☒ Secure Storage
☒ Anonymous Response ☐ Confidential Response

Exact Location Where Signed Consent Forms Will Be Filed:
(Must be kept on file for 3 years after the completion of the project).

* Must include signature of committee chair on protocol
REQUEST FOR EXEMPTION from full IRB review

Some research projects involving human subjects are exempt from review by the IRB. See the attached sheet on research categories exempt from full IRB review.

Basis for Exemption [Please refer to attached "Categories Exempt From Full IRB Review."]

☒ Established Educational Settings/Normal Educational Practices (a letter of approval from a school official must be obtained before the study can be conducted; send copy to the IRB)

☐ Use of educational anonymous tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, advancement; attach copy).

☒ Survey or interview procedures [unless subjects might be identified, put at legal or personal risk, and unless survey or procedures deal with sensitive matters of personal behavior]

☐ Observations of public behavior [unless subjects might be identified, put at legal or personal risk, and unless observations deal with sensitive matters of personal behavior]

☐ Anonymous collection or study of existing documents, records, pathological or diagnostic specimens.

☐ Taste and food quality evaluation and consumer acceptance studies.

The U.S. population is becoming increasingly culturally, linguistically, economically, and ethnically diverse. The research needs to make a concerted effort to ensure that research subjects reflect the population demographically, including those groups who have been traditionally underrepresented. However, it is recognized that the available pool of subjects may preclude having a balanced population. If you cannot use a diverse population in your research, you must justify why not.

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
Principal Investigator Signature and Date

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
Graduate Committee Chair Signature and Date

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
Department Head Signature and Date

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
Institutional Review Board Signature and Date
**Sample Detailed Form**
Used By: Texas A&M University in 2001

Form II

Protocol Format for Use of Human Subject in Research

Part A

Project Title: Association of Research Libraries LibQUAL+ Project: Service Quality Measures
Principal Investigator: Fred Heath, Dean of Texas A&M General Libraries
845-8111
Fax: 845-6238
e-mail: fheath@tamu.edu

Sponsor/Source of Funds: Association of Research Libraries is the sponsor

Participating university libraries: University of Arizona, Arizona State University, University of Arkansas, Baylor University, Brigham Young University, Clemson University, University of Colorado, Colorado State University, Emory University, University of Guelph, University of Houston, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Iowa State University, Linda Hall Library, Miami University of Ohio, Michigan State University, University of Mississippi, University of Missouri, University of Nebraska, University of New Mexico, Northwestern University Medical School, Ohio University, Oklahoma State University, University of Oregon, Oregon State University, University of Pittsburgh, Southern Illinois University, University of Texas, Texas A&M University, Texas Tech University, University of Utah, Utah State University, Virginia Tech University, Washburn University, University of Washington, Washington State University, University of Waterloo.

The project costs are funded by the Texas A&M General Libraries, the Association of Research Libraries, a grant from the U.S. Department of Education Fund of the Improvement of Postsecondary Education, and by the project participants.

Part B

I have read the Belmont Report, ‘Ethical Procedures and Guidelines for the Protection of Human Subjects of Research; and subscribe to the principles it contains. In light of this Declaration, I present for the Board’s consideration the following information which will be explained to the subjects about the research activity.

**SELECTION AND SOURCES OF SUBJECTS**

Texas A&M University is working with data from the institutions named above.
As background, each university will (a) ask approximately 2,000 members of its community (900 undergraduates, 600 graduates, and 600 faculty) (b) who have in the interest of diversity been randomly selected to respond to a Web survey about issues of library service quality. As the sample is randomly drawn, it is anticipated that (c) the ages will reflect the university range and will be generally from 10 to 75. There will be (d) no compensation. Each survey will take place (e) in March 2001 from workstation on the campuses of the participating institutions. The data will be collected (f) on secure servers located in the Texas A&M Main Library, and reported back to the participants as aggregated mean score data. Individual responses of participants will be wholly confidential.

EXPERIMENTAL PROCEDURE

In March, each respondent will be invited to log onto the Web form created by the participating institution and respond to a customer satisfaction survey. The survey, LibQUAL+, is a large-scale, user-based assessment of library service effectiveness that is being developed by the Association of Research Libraries in collaboration with Texas A&M. LibQUAL+ was patterned after the SERVQUAL instrument developed by Leonard L. Berry (Distinguished Professor, Texas A&M University), A. Parasuraman, and Valarie A. Zeithaml. The LibQUAL+ survey takes about fifteen minutes to complete. The questionnaire is straightforward and involves no deception or coercion. Potential respondents may elect not to proceed with the survey after reading the guarantees of confidentiality and privacy.

RISKS AND BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS

(a) There are no risks to the respondents other than the ordinary risks of daily life and chosen occupation. Respondents are free to decline to participate in the survey and can elect to leave the survey incomplete.

(b) The benefits to the respondents are those to the universities generally. For the first time, North American academic libraries will be able to assess the returns on their annual investment in terms of user evaluation of service quality. Strength and weaknesses across the several dimensions defining service quality will be identified, best practices among participating universities will also surface, allowing libraries to work collegially with other institution to improve local practices.

SIGNATURE

Fred Heath
Dean, Texas A&M General Libraries and
Holder of the Sterling C. Evans Endowed Chair
February 15, 2001
Appendix B: Sample Communications

Survey Notification Example 1
March 27, 2008

TO: UW-L Faculty

FROM: Anita Evans, Library Director

SUBJECT: Murphy Library Web Survey

As we plan for the future of Murphy Library, it is essential that we understand your perceptions and expectations so that we can provide services you most need.

In a few days, you will receive an email with a link to a library service quality survey. Please take just a few minutes of your time to respond—approximately 10–15 minutes according to sample response rates. Your participation is important so that we know how the library can best serve the UW-L community.

Murphy Library is one of hundreds of academic libraries across the country administering this “LibQUAL+®” survey, including most UW institutions. The survey will be especially useful because we can benchmark our results against those of other campuses and identify best practices. Also, we conducted a parallel survey in 2004, and the survey this spring will allow us to compare 2008 data with the first survey. We can assess where we have made progress or if there are any widening gaps between your expectations and what services and information resources we provide.

Please be assured that your answers are confidential. No identifying links between responses and the individual responding will be retained and only aggregated data will be reported. If you have any difficulty using the survey, please let us know by using the email link at the end of the survey or by emailing: libdirector@uwlax.edu.

People who participate in the survey are eligible for some prizes, which include iPods, certificates for iTunes, pizza, and more. If you choose, you can enter a drawing for those incentives by including your e-mail address at the end of the survey.

Many thanks for helping us to improve library services!

Courtesy: University of Wisconsin-La Crosse
Survey Notification Example 2
October 13, 2008

TO: [invitee]

FROM: Rosann Bazirjian, Dean of University Libraries

SUBJECT: Libraries Web Survey

Your opinion counts!

In a few days, you will receive an email providing you with a link to a library service quality survey called LibQUAL+. As we plan for the University Libraries’ future, it is important that we understand the perceptions and expectations of our campus community so that we may provide the services and resources that you need to be successful.

LibQUAL is a survey developed by the Association of Research Libraries to measure library service quality and identify best practices. To date, it has been taken by over 1 million users at over 1000 libraries throughout the world!

UNCG participated in LibQUAL in 2003 and we made several improvements based on the results including extending Library hours, improving Journal Finder and increasing our electronic resources. Your voice was heard and we want to listen again!

By responding to the survey, you will provide essential information for us. When you receive the email, please take the time to complete the Web survey. We would greatly appreciate your help and thank-you for your participation. Your participation means a lot to the UNCG University Libraries!

When you complete the survey you may choose to submit your name for drawings for:

- A grand prize of an iPod 8GB Touch
- One of four $50 gas cards
- One of three $25 gift certificates to the UNCG Bookstore

Courtesy: University of North Carolina at Greensboro
Survey Invitation Example 1
Subject: OSU Library Survey Offers Chance to Win TV, Camera, or Gift Card!

Message:

Help us help you; and enter for a chance to win a great prize! You have been selected from among OSU students to participate in a library quality improvement survey to help us serve you better.

For a chance to win a 26” flat screen TV, a 7.1 mega pixels digital camera, or one of fifteen $25 Wal-Mart gift cards, submit your email address when you complete the survey.

Let me assure you that your responses will be held in confidence. No identifying links between responses and the individual responding will be retained. Combined data only will be reported.

I would appreciate it if you would complete the survey today, or within the next few days. It will only take about fifteen minutes of time. Please answer the questions for the library you use most often. Many thanks for your help!

If you have any difficulty in accessing the survey or if you have questions, contact Karen Neurohr, Assessment Librarian at librarysurvey@okstate.edu or call 405.744.2376.

Take the survey here: [survey link]

Courtesy: Oklahoma State University

Survey Invitation Example 2
April 2000

Please help us. You can really contribute to having a better understanding of what our community thinks about Virginia Tech library services by participating in a very important electronic survey. Sample responses indicate it takes an average of 13 minutes to complete the form. Your investment of a bit of time now to respond will be greatly appreciated. Virginia Tech is one of [number of projected participants] academic libraries especially selected to pilot a library survey on services. This survey is important because it will:

Help us better understand how the VT community rates library services. Allow us to benchmark BT results against other libraries to determine best practices.

Let us know where we can concentrate service improvements for VT users. I am contacting you because you are part of the random sample chosen to represent all Virginia Tech students and faculty. When a sample survey is done it is very
important to get good participation so I hope you will choose to respond. Let me assure you that if you participate, your responses will be held in confidence. No identifying links between responses and the individual responding will be retained. Combined data only will be reported.

I would certainly appreciate it if you would complete the online survey at [URL varies by institution] right now, or within the next few days.

We are able to provide a small incentive for your participation. If you choose, you can enter a drawing for [incentive] by keying in your email address at the end of the survey.

If you have any difficulty in accessing or taking the survey, please contact Don Kenney, Associate Dean University of Libraries at [email address] or [phone number].

Many thanks for helping us out with this important survey.

Eileen E. Hutchingham
Dean of Libraries
Virginia Tech

Courtesy: Virginia Tech

Survey Reminder Example

[Today’s date]
TO: [faculty, staff, or student’s name]
FROM: [dean, director, or university librarian]
SUBJECT: LIBRARY WEB SURVEY

[This reminder message should go out three times at three-to-five day intervals after the original message was sent.]

A few days ago your received an email message asking you to assist us in assessing the quality of our library services by filling out a web-based survey.

If you have filled out the survey, thank you! If not, we ask you to take a few minutes to go to URL below and help us in this important endeavor by taking the survey. Only you can tell us how well we are serving your library needs.

[URL varies by institution]

Please complete the survey no later than [the original date requested]. If you have any difficulty is accessing or taking the survey, please contact [the name of a local liaison at the university] [...phone # and email].

Don’t forget to key in your email address at the end of the survey if you want to enter the drawing for [local and/or project prizes].

Thank you for your assistance.

Courtesy: Texas A&M University Libraries
# Appendix C: Sample Survey

## Long Version

### Test Survey

**Welcome!**

We are committed to improving your library services. Better understanding your expectations will help us tailor those services to your needs.

We are conducting this survey to measure library service quality and identify best practices through the Association of Research Libraries' LibQUAL+® program.

Please answer all items. Thank you for your participation!

Please rate the following statements (1 is worst; 5 is highest) by indicating:

| Attraction — the number that represents the maximum level of service that you would find acceptable |
| Desirability — the number that represents the level of service that you personally want |
| Perceived — the number that represents the level of service that you believe our library currently provides |

For each item, you must either rate the item in all three columns or identify the item as "NA" (not applicable). Selecting "NA" will override all other answers for that item.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When it comes to...</th>
<th>My/Minimum Service Level is</th>
<th>My/Desired Service Level is</th>
<th>Perceived Service Performance is</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Employees who instil confidence in users</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Making electronic resources accessible from home or office</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Library space that inspires study and learning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Giving users individual attention</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) A library Web site enabling me to locate information on my own</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) Library orientation / induction sessions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7) Employees who are consistently courteous</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8) The printed library materials I need for my work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9) Quiet space for individual activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10) Responses to: needs to understand questions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11) The electronic information resources I need</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12) Support from library staff when working away from the library</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13) Employees who have the knowledge to answer your questions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14) Using personal devices in the library to access electronic information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15) A comfortable and inviting location</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16) Employees who deal with users in a caring fashion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17) Modern equipment that lets me easily access needed information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18) Employees who understand the needs of their users</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
18) Easy-to-use access tools that allow me to find things on my own

19) A gateway for study, learning, or research

When it comes to...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My Minimum Service Level Is</th>
<th>My Desired Service Level Is</th>
<th>Perceived Service Performance Is</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

20) Willingness to help users

21) Making information easily accessible for independent use

22) Print and/or electronic journal collections I require for my work

23) Community space for group learning and group study

24) Dependability in handling users’ service problems

Please indicate the degree to which you agree with the following statements:

26) The library helps me stay abreast of developments in my field(s) of interest.

27) The library aids my advancement in my academic discipline or work.

28) The library enables me to be more efficient in my academic pursuits or work.

29) The library helps me distinguish between trustworthy and untrustworthy information.

30) The library provides me with the information skills I need in my work or study.

31) In general, I am satisfied with the way I am treated at the library.

32) In general, I am satisfied with library support for my learning, research, and/or teaching needs.

33) How would you rate the overall quality of the service provided by the library?

Please indicate your library usage patterns:

34) How often do you use resources on library premises?

35) How often do you access library resources through a library Web page?

36) How often do you use Yahoo!, Google, or non-library gateways for information?

Please answer a few questions about yourself:

37) The library that you use most often:

38) Age:

39) Sex:

40) Full or part-time student?

41) Discipline:

42) Position: (Select the ONE option that best describes you.)

43) Please enter any comments about library services in the box below:

44) Enter your e-mail address if you would like to enter an optional drawing for a prize. Your e-mail address will be kept confidential and will not be linked to your survey responses. (Not Required)
Lite Version

Test Survey

Welcome!
We are committed to improving your library services. Better understanding your expectations will help us tailor those services to your needs.

Please answer all items. Thank you for your participation.

Please rate the following statements (1 is lowest, 5 is highest) by indicating:

- Minimum — the number that represents the minimum level of service that you would find acceptable
- Desired — the number that represents the level of service that you personally want
- Perceived — the number that represents the level of service that you believe our library currently provides

For each item, you must either rate the item in all those columns OR identify the item as "NA" if not applicable. Selecting "NA" will override all other answers for that item.

When it comes to...
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My Minimum</th>
<th>My Desired</th>
<th>Perceived</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please indicate the degree to which you agree with the following statements:

- The library helps me distinguish between trustworthy and untrustworthy information
- I feel more efficient in my academic pursuits or work
- I feel satisfied with library support to my learning, research, and teaching needs
- How would you rate the overall quality of the service provided by the library?

Please indicate your library usage patterns:

- Do you use resources on library premises?
- Do you access library resources through a library Web page?
- Do you use better, Google, or your library gateway for information?

Please answer a few questions about yourself:

- The library that you use most often:
- Age:
- Sex:
- Full or part-time student?
- Discipline:
- Position (Select the ONE option that best describes you)
  - Please enter any comments about library services in the box below:

Enter your e-mail address if you would like to enter an optional drawing for a prize. Your e-mail address will be kept confidential and will not be linked to your survey responses. (Not required.)

Complete the Survey

If you have any questions e-mail the Survey Coordinator.
Appendix D: Protocol for Translating the LibQUAL Survey Instrument

The LibQUAL survey has been implemented at libraries in 37 countries, including: Australia, Bahrain, China, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, France, Ireland, Jamaica, Scotland, the Netherlands, South Africa, and the United Arab Emirates. The survey has been offered in 19 languages including Afrikaans, British English, Chinese (Traditional), Danish, Dutch, Finnish, French (Canada, France, Belgium), German, Greek, Hebrew, Japanese, Norwegian, Spanish, Swedish, and Welsh. This protocol document outlines the steps required to translate and implement the survey in a new language.

Because of the many steps that are required to complete a translation, institutions that are interested in translating and using a new language version of the survey are encouraged to contact the LibQUAL team at libqual@arl.org as far in advance of the survey start date as possible.

Initial Translation
ARL relies on interested and participating libraries to assist with the translation of the LibQUAL survey instrument into new languages. All language translations are based on the American English version of the survey. ARL provides libraries with a spreadsheet that includes all the text used in the survey (both from the web interface and the survey instrument itself). Generally, one library staff member performs the initial translation of the instrument from American English into the new language. Once that translation is complete, other library staff members are asked to review the translation and suggest changes or edits. ARL works closely with the staff to provide context for the survey terminology and answer any questions.

The spreadsheet provided by ARL breaks down the survey text into small segments (e.g., core survey questions, demographic questions, survey web text) and provides blank space for translators to fill in the translated text next to the original wording. Translators are required to complete the spreadsheet in its entirety, typing in the translated information.

Backward Translation into American English
Once the survey has been translated into the new language, ARL will hire a different translator to translate the instrument back into American English. Backward translation is an important technique for eliminating translation-related problems. The goal of the backward translation is to ensure that the translated instrument is as close to the original version as possible, in order to eliminate or minimize any linguistic nuances that could affect user responses to the survey items.
Demographics
One element of the LibQUAL survey that may require customization on a language-by-language basis is the demographic section. The demographic questions on the LibQUAL survey are specific to each institution type (i.e., university/college library, law library, public library). Depending on the type of institution that will be using the new translation and the types of users that will be responding, ARL may work with the institution to identify any changes that should be made to the demographic questions to account for cultural or institutional differences.

Adding the Language to the Online Interface
Once the survey text has been completely translated, LibQUAL staff must manually enter it into the online survey interface in order for it to be available for institutions to use. This process is time-consuming and requires careful crosschecking on the part of the LibQUAL team. Additional consultation with the translators may be required if the LibQUAL team has questions or needs additional information.

Previewing the Translated Survey
All LibQUAL participants have the opportunity to review their library’s survey online before launching it to users. In the case of institutions that are using a newly translated version of the survey, this preview is mandatory. The preview is the last opportunity for participants to make changes to their survey instrument. For that reason, institutions that are using a new translation should take special care when previewing their survey, and report to ARL any errors in translation, phrasing, or meaning so that these errors can be corrected before launch.

Implementing Multiple Language Versions at One Library
Several past LibQUAL participants have implemented the survey in two or more languages at once (i.e., American English and Canadian French) in order to provide their users with the opportunity to take the survey in the language with which they are most comfortable. If your library is interested in this type of survey implementation and you do not see your preferred languages listed during registration, please contact the LibQUAL team at libqual@arl.org.

Results Notebooks
After an institution has completed the LibQUAL survey, they receive a results notebook (available online in PDF) containing information about their survey run. For those institutions that implement the survey in a language other than American English, their results notebook will include the translated survey text where appropriate (for example, survey items, demographic questions, etc.) However, the main text of the notebook (introductory text, captions, etc.) will be in American English.
Presentation on Canadian French Implementation
A team of researchers presented a research paper at the 5th Northumbria International Conference in Durham, UK, in July of 2003. Their presentation titled “Cross-cultural implementation of LibQUAL+™: the French language experience,” may be of interest to other libraries considering translations. In addition to describing the steps involved in translating the survey instrument into Canadian French, their presentation also affirmatively answered the research question of whether the Canadian French translation process produced scores that are equivalent to English versions of the survey.7

For More Information
For additional information on translating the LibQUAL survey into a new language, or to discuss new translation opportunities, contact the LibQUAL team at libqual@arl.org.

---
