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TOWN, Stephen
Cranfield University

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Using LibQUAL+ to measure, compare and improve library quality

J. Stephen Town
Cranfield University

LIBER Annual General Conference
Uppsala, July 4-7

Summary

- Background to LibQUAL+
- The SCONUL Experience
- Two Case Studies
 - Cranfield University
 - Glasgow University

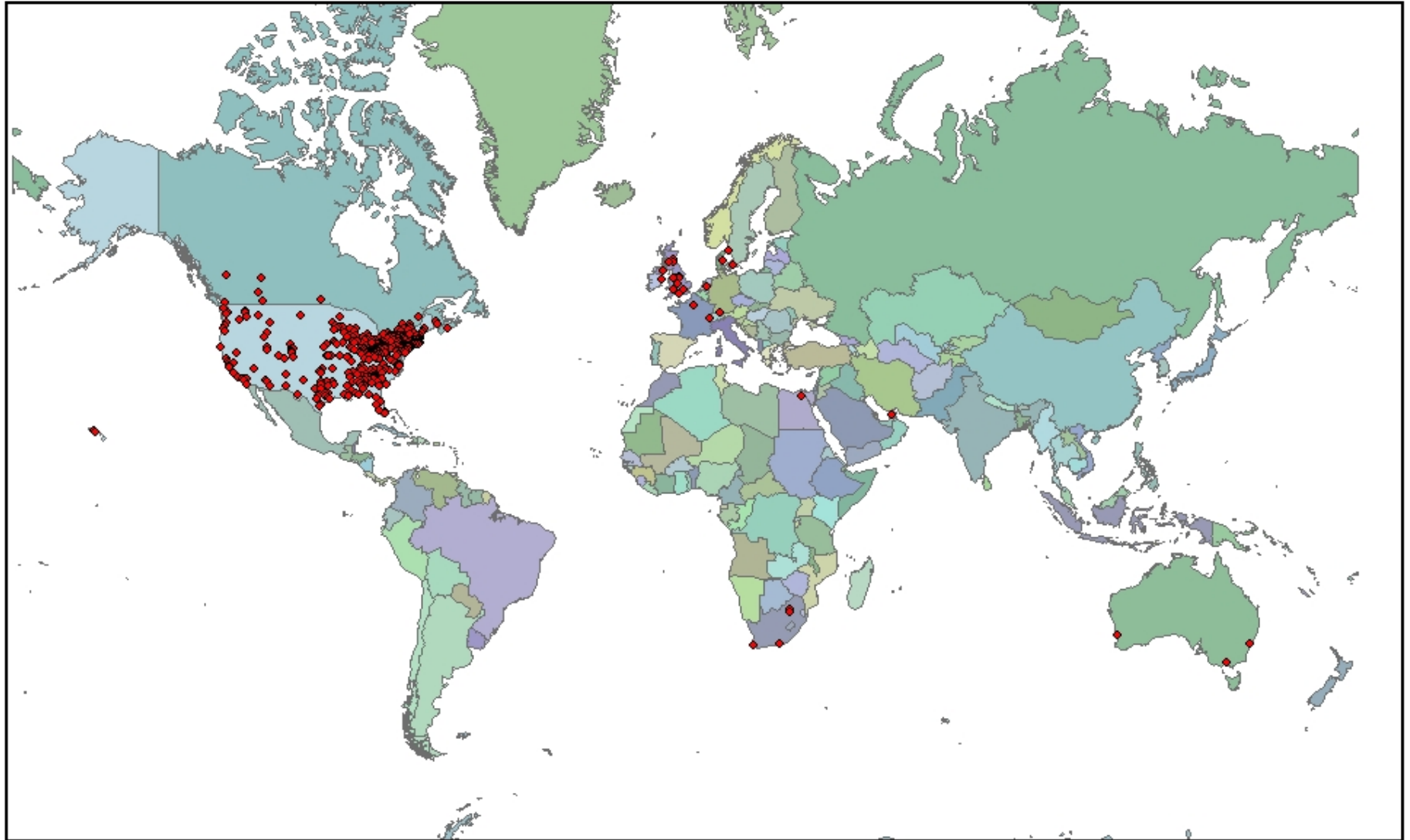
What is LibQUAL+?

- A web-based survey tool designed to measure Library quality
- Provides comparable data with other institutions to help benchmark services
- Provides detailed data to suggest a service improvement agenda, and longitudinal data to test improvement actions

LibQUAL+ History

- ARL New Measures initiative
- Developed by Texas A&M University
- Based on SERVQUAL
- Piloted in 2000
- Now used by over 850 libraries worldwide

World LibQual Survey



Projection: World Mercator
Datum: GCS WGS1984

Data Source: LibQual Survey conducted by Texas A&M University,
ESRI, National Data Atlas

◆ Participating Libraries

March 2, 2005
K. Weimer & J. Munchrath, TAMU Libraries

LibQUAL+ in Europe

- SCONUL (UK & Ireland)
 - 2003: Pilot with 20 member libraries
 - 2004: 17 participants
 - 2005: 17 participants
 - 2006: 22 participants
 - 55 different institutions over the 4 years
- European Business Schools Librarians' Group
 - 2004: Pilot with 5 member libraries
 - 2006: 12 participants in 7 European countries
- National Health Service (UK)
 - 2006: Pilot with 12 member libraries

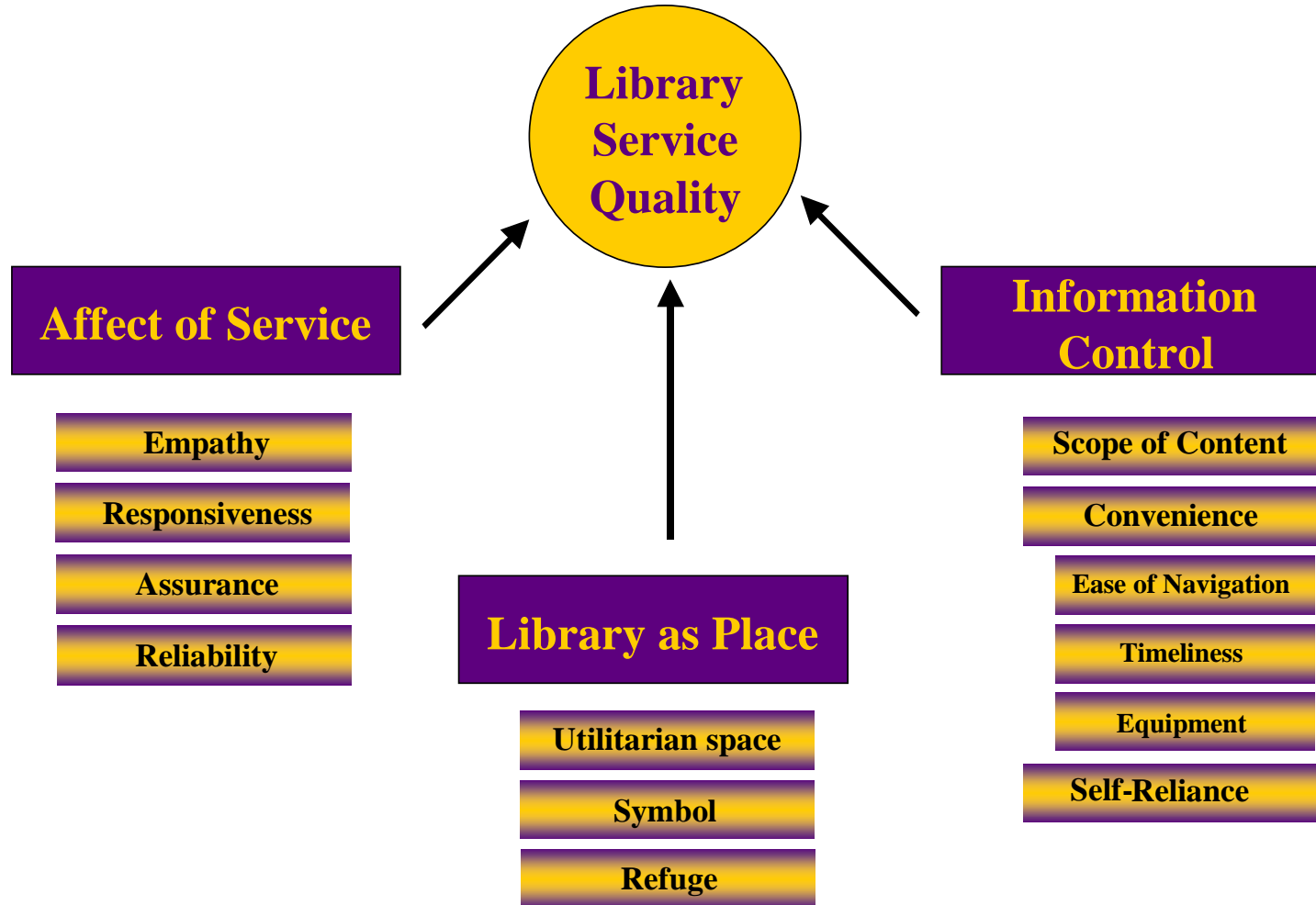
Benefits of LibQUAL+

- Managed service
 - for delivery & analysis
 - cost
- Web-based
- Gap analysis
- Permits benchmarking
 - Peers, nationally & internationally

Time frame

- Surveys can be run for a chosen duration in:
 - Session 1: January - June
 - Session 2: July - December
- January / February
 - Training for Session 1 Participants
 - Results meeting for Session 2 Participants
- July / August
 - Training for Session 2 Participants
 - Results meeting for Session 1 Participants

Dimensions of Library Service Quality

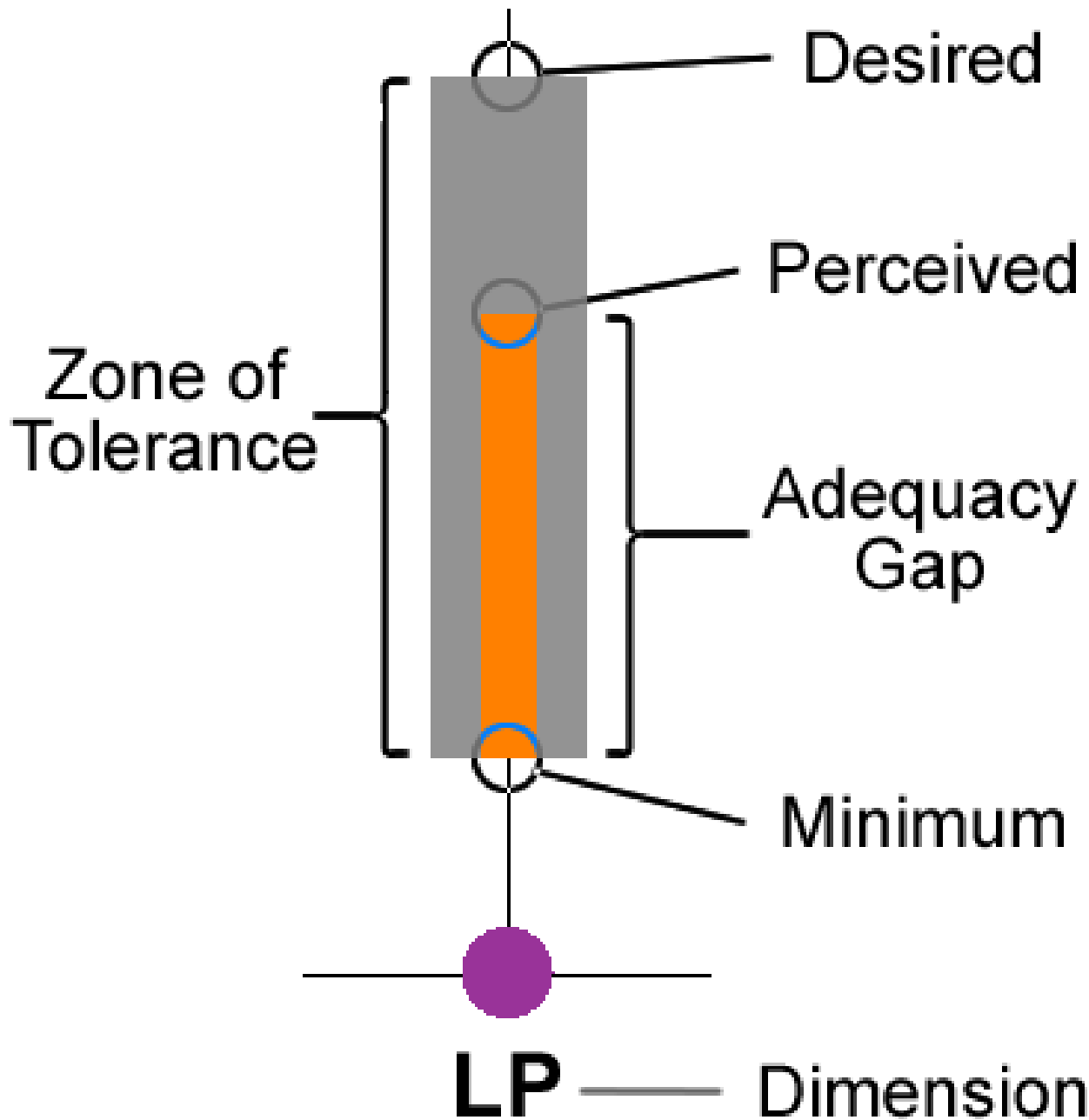


The Survey Comprises of

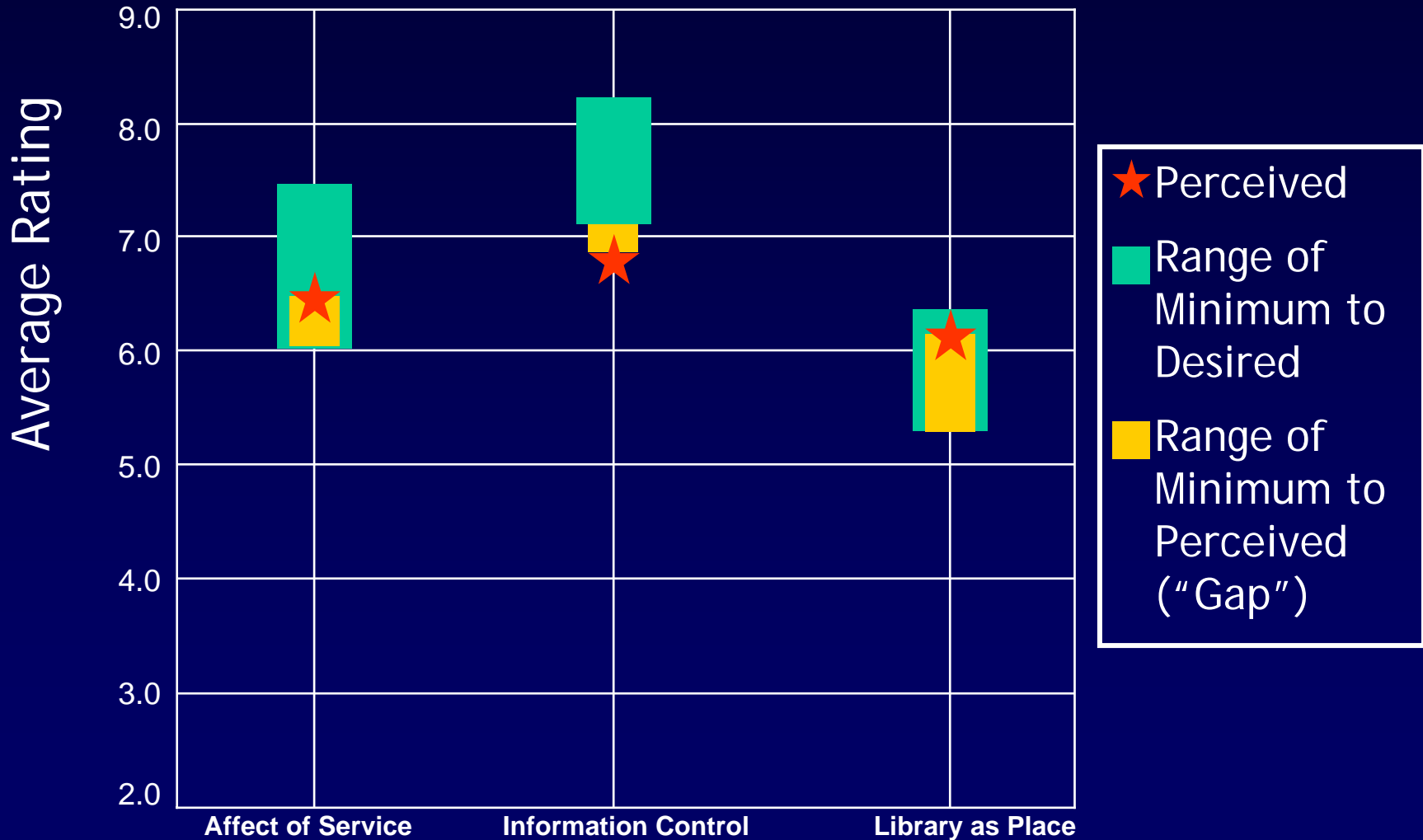
- 22 Core questions
- 5 Local questions (selected by the institution)
- 5 Information Literacy questions
- 3 General Satisfaction questions
- Demographic questions
- A free-text comments box

How it works

- For the 22 “core” questions and 5 “local” questions users rate out of 1 – 9 their:
 - Minimum service level
 - Desired service level
 - Perceived service performance
- This gives us a “Zone of Tolerance” for each question, and an “Adequacy Gap”



Benefits of gap analysis



Comments box

- Free-Text comments box at the end of the survey
- About 40% of participants provide open-ended comments, and these are linked to demographics and quantitative data
- Users elaborate the details of their concerns
- Users feel the need to be constructive in their criticisms, and offer specific suggestions for action

The SCONUL Experience

LibQUAL+ Participants 2003

- University of Bath
- Cranfield University
- Royal Holloway & Bedford New College
- University of Lancaster
- University of Wales, Swansea
- University of Edinburgh
- University of Glasgow
- University of Liverpool
- University of London Library
- University of Oxford
- University College Northampton
- University of Wales College Newport
- University of Gloucestershire
- De Montfort University
- Leeds Metropolitan University
- Liverpool John Moores University
- Robert Gordon University
- South Bank University
- University of the West of England, Bristol
- University of Wolverhampton

LibQUAL+ Participants 2004

- Brunel University
- Loughborough University
- University of Strathclyde
- University of York
- Glasgow University
- Sheffield University
- Trinity College, Dublin
- UMIST + University of Manchester
- University of Liverpool
- Anglia Polytechnic University
- University of Westminster
- London South Bank University
- Napier University
- Queen Margaret University College
- University College Worcester
- University of East London

LibQUAL+ Participants 2005

- University of Exeter
- University of Edinburgh
- University of Dundee
- University of Bath
- University of Ulster
- University College Northampton
- University of Birmingham
- Roehampton University
- University of Glasgow
- University of Surrey
- Royal Holloway UoL
- City University
- Cranfield University
- University of Luton
- Dublin Institute of Technology
- London South Bank University
- Coventry University

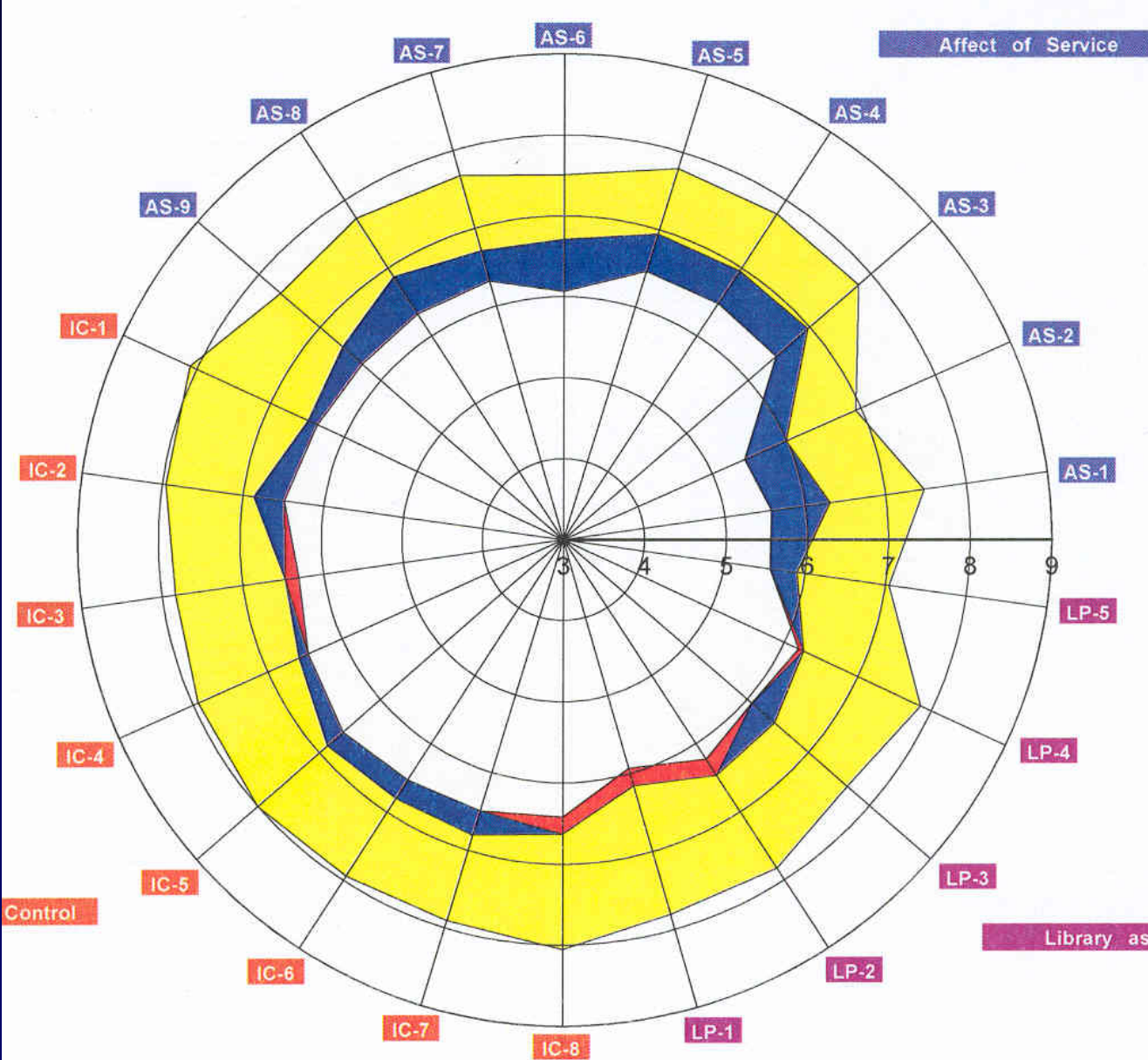
LibQUAL+ Participants 2006

- Cambridge University
- Cranfield University
- Goldsmiths College
- Institute of Education
- Institute of Technology Tallaght*
- Queen Mary, University of London
- Robert Gordon University
- St. George's University of London
- University of Aberdeen
- University College for the Creative Arts
- University of Central Lancashire
- University of Gloucestershire
- University of Leeds
- University of Leicester
- University of Liverpool
- University of the West of England
- University of Warwick
- University of Westminster
- London South Bank University
- Scottish Royal Agricultural College
- University of Birmingham
- University of Glasgow

Overall Potential UK Sample to 2006

- Full variety of institutions
- 43% of institutions
- 38% of HE students (>800,000)
- 42% of Libraries
- 48% of Library expenditure

SCONUL Overall Results 2005



Aims & purposes

- Analysis compilation
- Comparison to existing survey methods
- A library focused survey
- Benchmarking
- Charter Mark application
- Strategic planning aid
- Real data as opposed to lobbying
- To make adjustments where needed
- To test improvement
- "User satisfaction - as simple as that"

Process Feedback

- Straightforward
- Publicity requires the most effort
- Difficulty in obtaining email addresses
- Difficulty in obtaining demographic data
- Very simple to administer
- Results as expected
- More in-depth detail obtained
- More 'discriminatory' than other surveys
- Helped to strengthen Library's case
- Comments very specific & helpful

Case Studies

Cranfield University at DCMT

- Cranfield's Library services at the Defence College of Management & Technology
- Contract situation demanding high quality services
- Military and civilian education and research in defence, management & technology
- About 1000 students, almost all postgraduate and post-experience

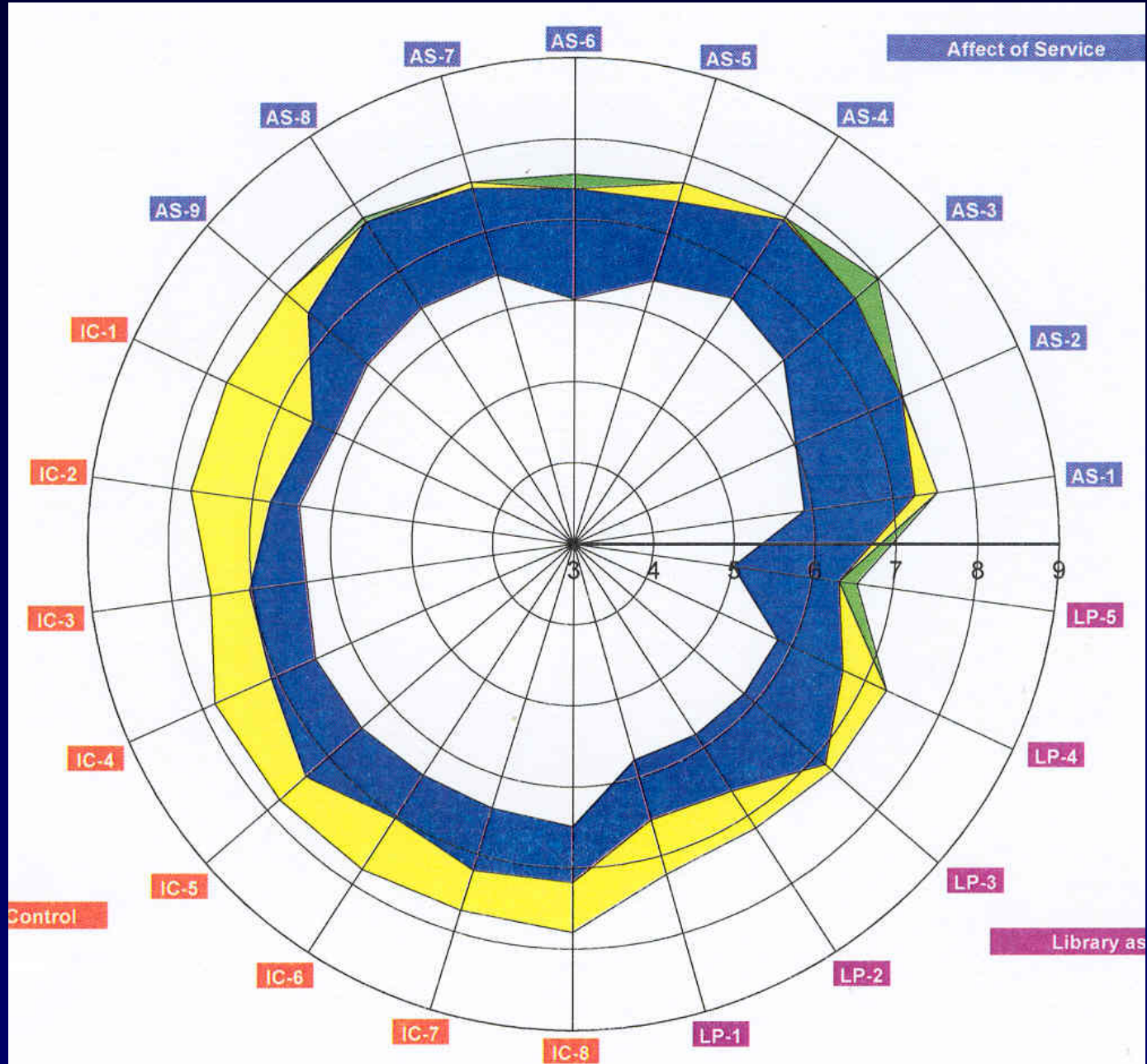
DCMT Library Surveys

- Student perspective (1993)
- Exit questionnaires (1994-)
- Information Services (Priority Search 1996)
- DTC MSc & MA Students (1997)
- Researchers Survey (Web based 1998)
- SCONUL Survey Pilot (1999)
- SCONUL Template (2001)
- LibQUAL+ (2003, 2005, 2006)

DCMT LibQUAL+ Surveys

- 2003, 2005, 2006
- Increasing responses
 - 11%, 16%, 22%
 - Year on year 40% up
- Increasing comments
 - 83, 153, 205 (almost 60% of respondents)
- Improved performance across three years

DCMT Overall 2006



Agenda for Action 2003

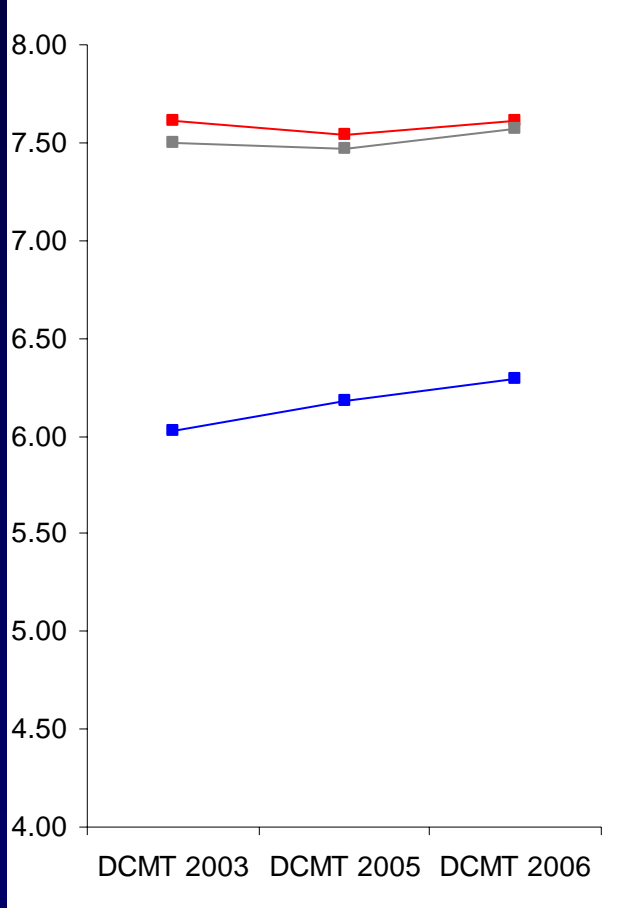
- Information skills training
- Improving staff specialist skills
- Access to electronic resources
- Customer care to different users

DCMT Survey aims for 2005-06

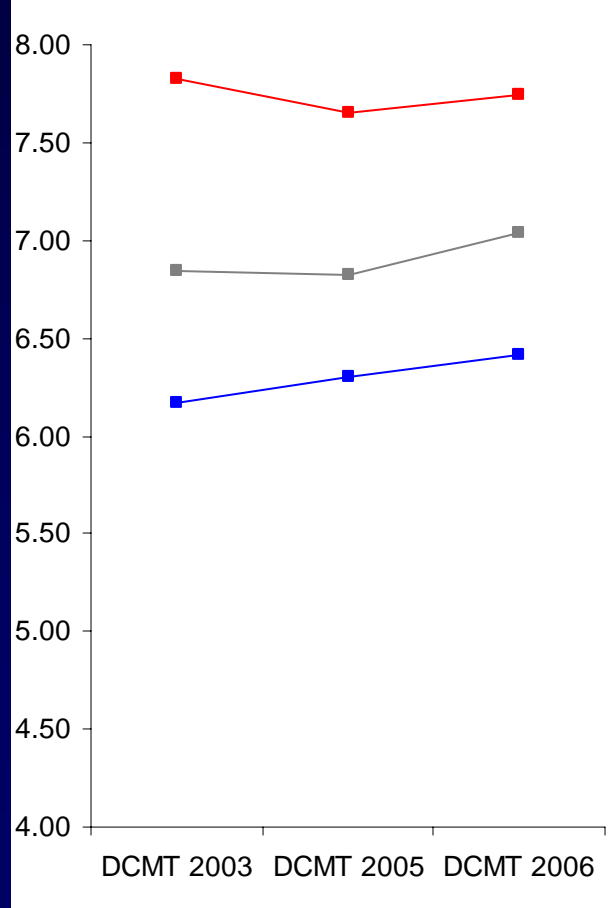
- Test new Library building
- Test launch of the new Library Web site
- Test maintenance of other progress
 - Improved capability in data analysis & presentation
- Develop a new strategy in line with changing academic needs

Changes over three years

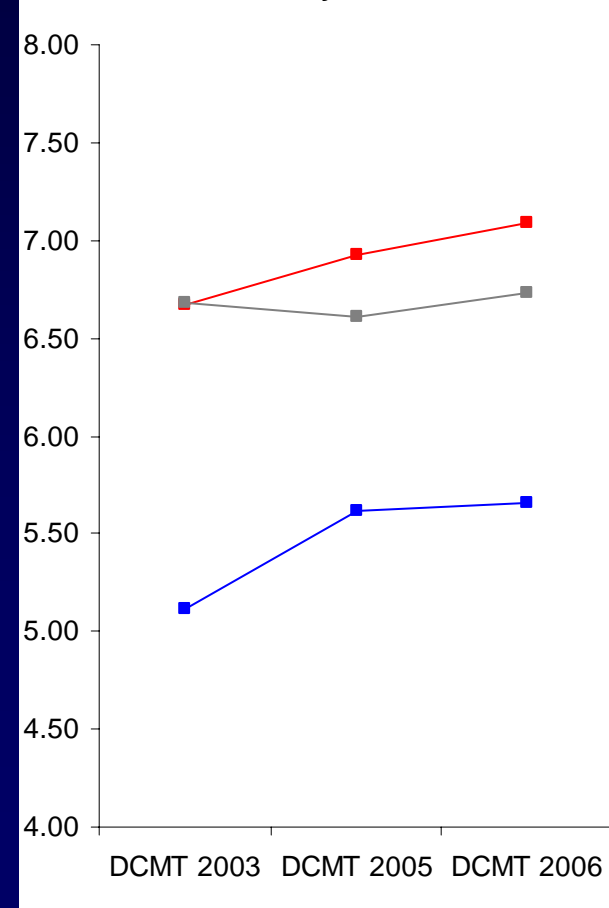
Affect of Service



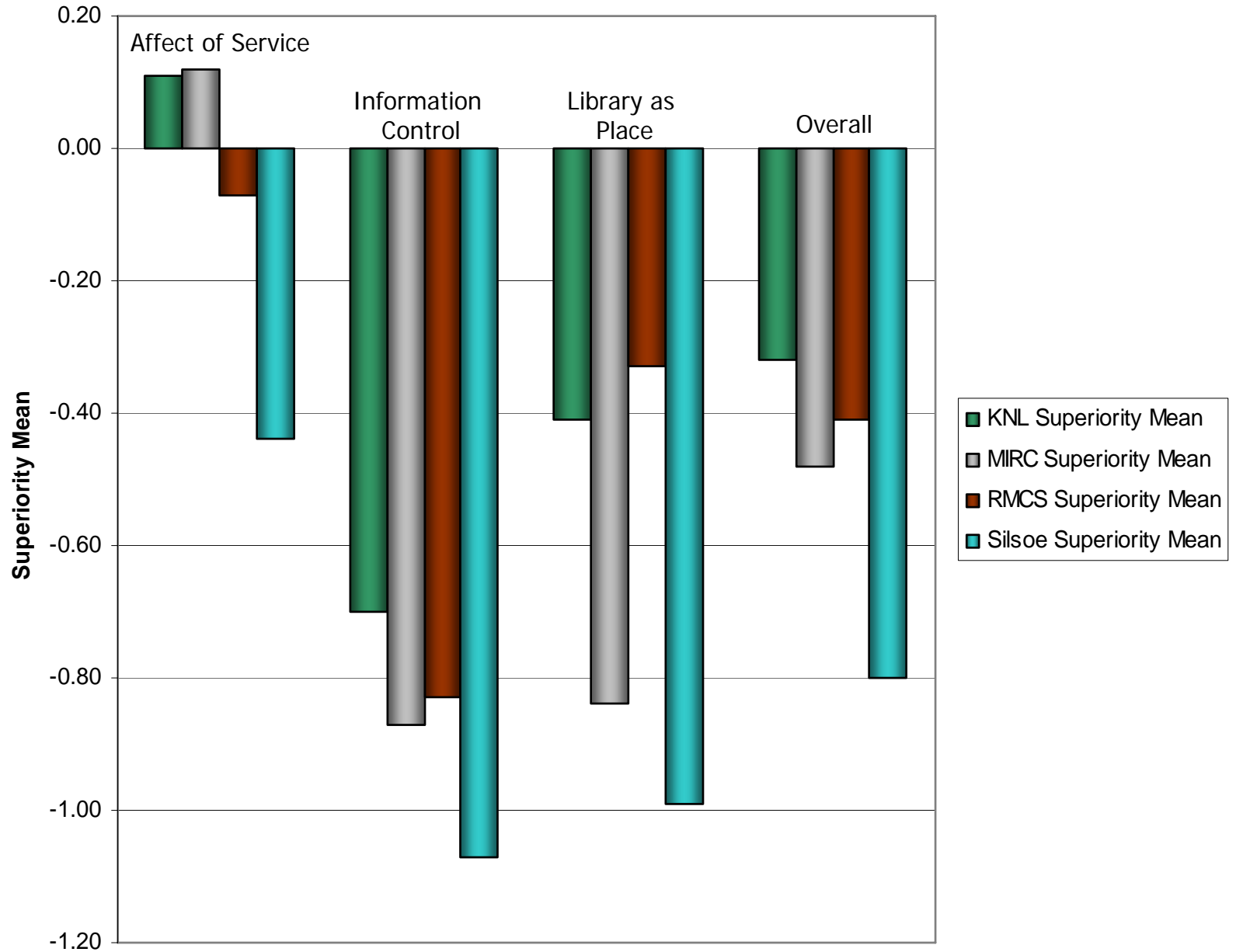
Information Control



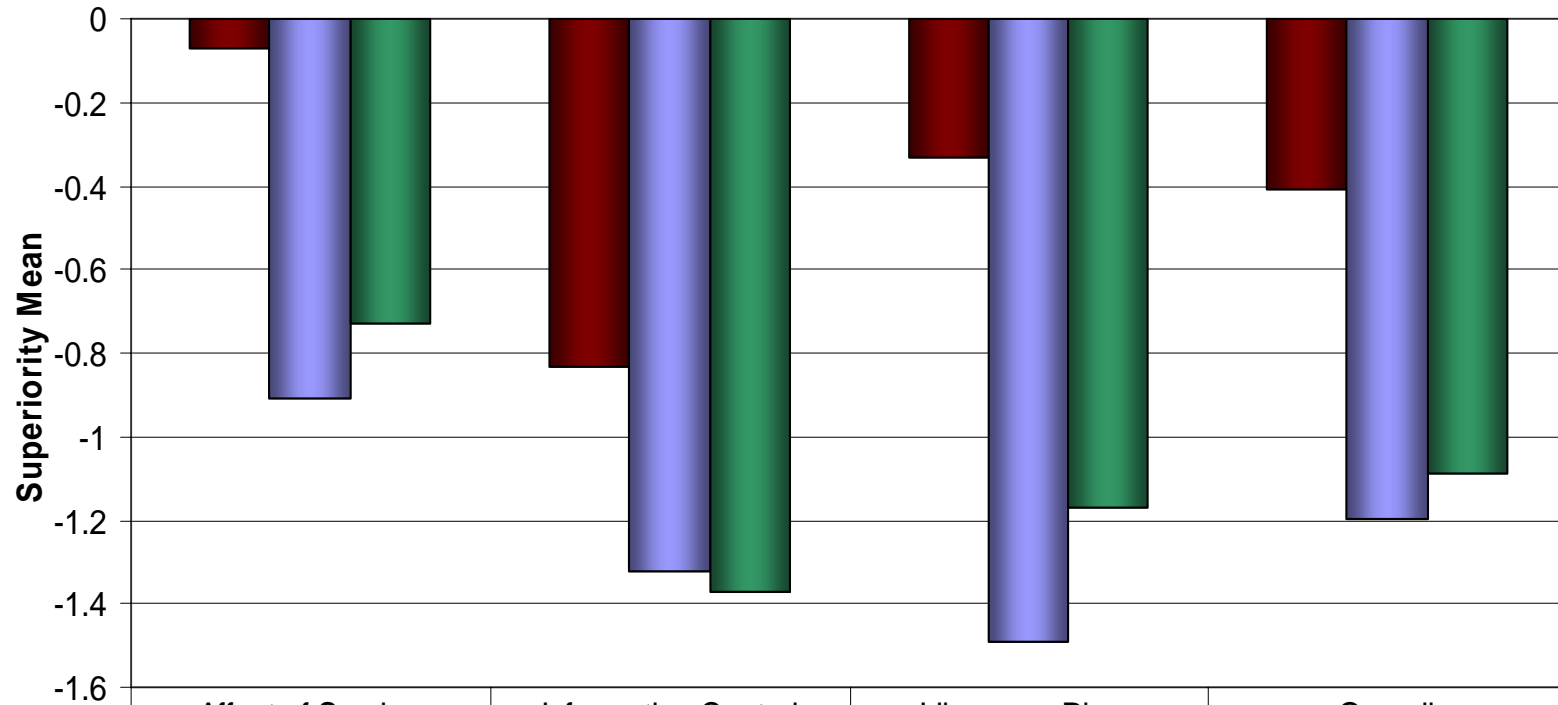
Library as Place



Internal Benchmarking



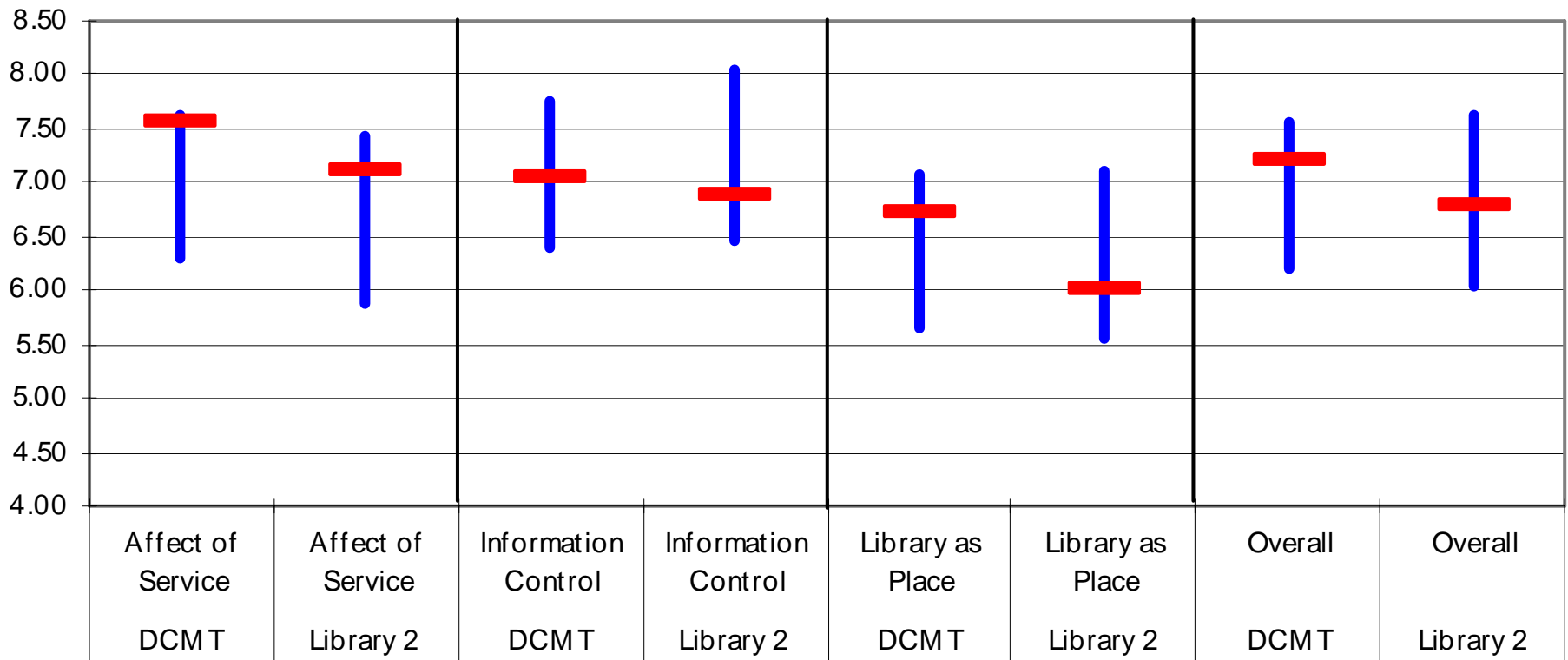
National Average External Benchmarking



	Affect of Service	Information Control	Library as Place	Overall
DCMT Superiority Mean	-0.07	-0.83	-0.33	-0.41
UK Superiority Mean	-0.91	-1.32	-1.49	-1.20
US Superiority Mean	-0.73	-1.37	-1.17	-1.09

Peer-to-Peer Benchmarking

Dimension Summary



University of Glasgow

- Founded in 1451
- Large research-led institution
- About 20,000 students in 10 Faculties, and about 6,000 staff
- Member of the Russell Group of major UK research-led Universities
- Founder member of Universitas 21

Survey Participation

- Participation in LibQUAL+ 2006 will be Glasgow's 4th successive year in the SCONUL Consortium
- 2006 - 1,535 responses
- 2005 - 1,423 responses
- 2004 - 2,212 responses, 920 comments
- 2003 - 502 responses, 402 comments

Aims of Use of the Data

- Strategic Service Developments
 - Data to support service development
 - Ability to identify where not meeting expectations
 - Measure if change has met need
- Budget Discussions
 - Data to support bid for increased funding
 - Data to support case for change in emphasis (towards e-provision)
- Marketing Position
 - Status of the library within the University
 - Importance of national & international benchmarking

LibQUAL+ Outcomes

- New Web Services Administrator
- Increased opening Hours
 - Earlier Saturday morning opening
 - Sunday morning opening
 - Increased late opening hours
(From January 2006 Mon-Thurs 08:00 – 02:00)
- Now providing 222,578 seat hours per week

Library Refurbishment Programme reinstated at costs in excess of £8 million

From:



To:



Conclusions

- LibQUAL+ is now a market leading survey tool for UK & Irish Academic & Research Libraries, and growing use in Europe
- Some significant advantages over other survey methods
- Additional support and data analysis is now available in Europe through ARL/Cranfield contract

LibQUAL+

If you would like to know more about LibQUAL+, or are considering participating as a consortium or independently see:

www.libqual.org

Or contact:

Selena Lock

email: s.a.lock@cranfield.ac.uk

Telephone: +44 (0) 1793 785561

Acknowledgements

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- Association of Research Libraries