

# unUXpected and UXpected feedback:

*Uncovering what students think of the new  
library and library services at Royal Holloway*

- Leanne Workman, Acting Head of Academic Liaison
- Emilia Brzozowska-Szczecina, Now Senior Information Advisor  
@ Kingston University



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# Overview

- What is UX?
- Background on our new library
- What UX research we've done
- Our findings – both the expected and unexpected!







# What is UX?

“User Experience or UX, as it is defined in the library context, is a suite of techniques based around first understanding and then improving the experiences people have when using our library services. It utilises ethnography and design to achieve this.”

*Ned Potter: <https://www.ned-potter.com/ux-in-libraries-resource-list/>*

A bit of background...



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# What we have now...









# New Library Feedback



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You Retweeted

**George Priestley** @bigmeatygeorge · 15 Sep 2017

Replying to @weejoker @RHUL\_Library

It's so stunning, I'm amazed and mesmerised 💙💛 2 years of building sites was so worth it 🙌



💬 1 ❤️ 2

You Retweeted

**Steven Franklin** @MagnaCartaPhD · 17 Sep 2017

As study spots go, the new EWD @RHUL\_Library



💬 1 ↻ 1 ❤️ 16 ✉



**Julia Koricheva**

@KorichevaLab

Following

1st day of Welcome Week @RoyalHolloway and my first visit to the new @RHUL\_Library. Great space & stunning views of the Founders Building!



10:35 AM - 18 Sep 2017

4 Retweets 19 Likes



💬 1 ↻ 4 ❤️ 19 ✉



# BUT...

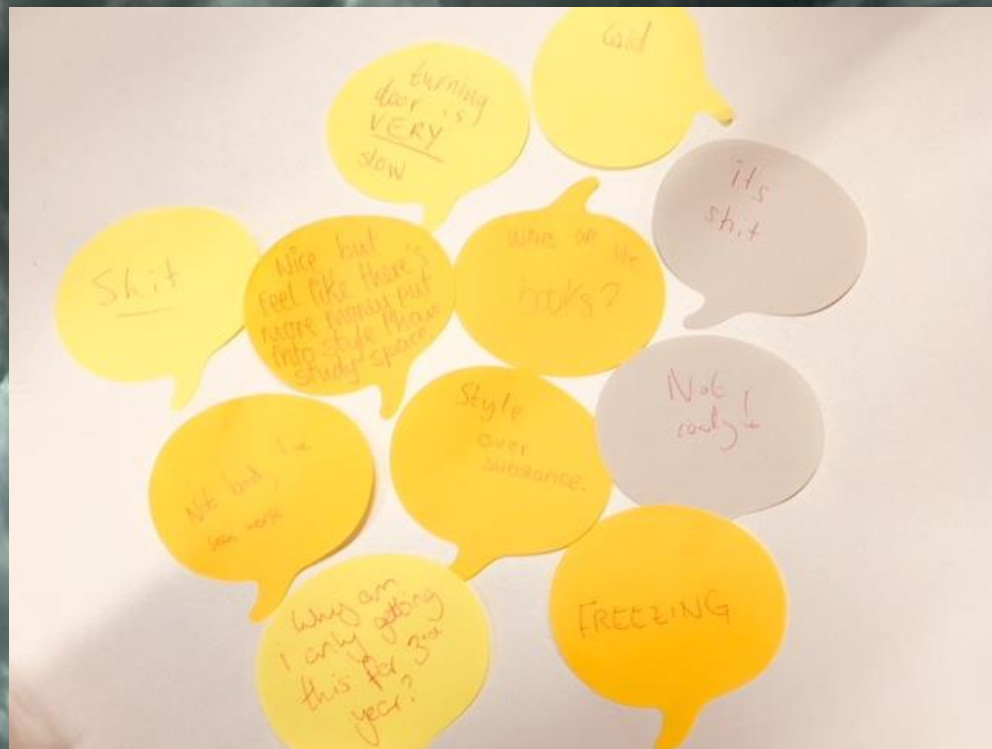


RHUL Library @RHUL\_Library · 18 Sep 2017

We removed ALL comments before we opened 24/7 on Fri! We needed some space for all the new comments, good AND bad! #KeepItComing



1





# BUT...



**Anya Eastman** @Anya\_Eastman

Sep 30, 2017 · Egham

Adore the new study space but please please could @RHUL\_Library sort out & enforce silent sections?! Dickens demands my full attention.



**Kanye Malick West** @Nythernia

Sep 29, 2017

@RHUL\_Library why is there no silent study section here 🙄🙄🙄🙄🙄🙄🙄



In reply to RHUL\_Library and 1 more



**Megan** @mafilkins\_

Sep 26, 2017

2 yrs of studying in Bedford means I am more used to most study spaces being silent, so imo it would make sense to follow that model



Show Conversation



**Jenny McHugh** @jmc\_hughy

Oct 23, 2017

I'm not being funny but the amount of people talking in the SILENT section of @RHUL\_Library is ridiculous. Wish someone would sort it out.



**Jenny McHugh** @jmc\_hughy

Oct 23, 2017

@RHUL\_Library are librarians meant to be enforcing the silent study areas? Because that would be helpful at the moment. >.>



**Jack O'Neill** @MrJack\_ONeill

Sep 25, 2017

@RHUL\_Library looks great with brilliant service but refusing to go there until some silent areas are introduced - how can one work!?



**Jack O'Neill** @MrJack\_ONeill

Sep 16, 2017

@RHUL\_Library when will the new library have silent areas?





# BUT...

## Silent Study areas at Davison Building



Elena Nikolaou started this petition to [Library Customer service of Royal Holloway](#)

Hello everybody,  
The Library Customer Service of Royal Holloway University of London set a new policy for our new library.  
The new policy suggests that there are not silent study spaces at Davison Building. There are just group study areas and individual study areas where people can still talk.  
Right now I am in an individual study area trying hard to study about my dissertation! People around me are talking laughing screaming and having fun.  
The library is NOT a coffeshop where people can meet and have fun! Davison Building is a place for us to STUDY and CONCENTRATE. It is a place for us to find PEACE in order to achieve our goals. We have to defend our rights and respect each other in order to succeed during these 3 years .  
PLEASE HELP ME BY SIGNING THIS PETITION TO GET BACK TO OUR LIBRARY SILENT STUDY SPACES



### Start a petition of your own

This petition starter stood up and took action.  
Will you do the same?

Start a petition

673 have signed. Let's get to 1,000!

First name

Last name

Email

Egham, TW20  
United Kingdom



- ☐ Share with Facebook friends  
☒ Display my name and comment on this petition

Sign this petition

By signing, you accept Change.org's [Terms of Service](#) and [Privacy Policy](#), and agree to receive occasional emails about campaigns on Change.org. You can unsubscribe at any time.

## Make the EWD Library efficient and functional



Emilie ANCELIN started this petition to [Royal Holloway University of London](#)

Following the huge number of complaints and issues concerning the actual state of the New EWD Library at Royal Holloway, and following : the great number of students not finding study spaces (1,400 spaces for 9000 students ...), non working sockets, out of service elevator, the continuing annoying beeping, non access to Post-Grad room for Masters students, the unreliable printing services, busy IT help desk, closed upper balcony... etc I have decided to start up this petition in order to put pressure onto the college to make those changes and improvement for our own welfare and sake and in order to pursue our studies in the best conditions possible.

Sign this petition if you agree and I will bring those issues to the Principal Paul Layzell, in person.

The more we are, the stronger we will be.

We pay up to £9000 a year, SO WE ARE expecting a certain range of services and commodities.

Please Sign & share this all around you. Thanks

Emilie ANCELIN  
3rd Year Law Student  
Student Representative on College Council.

914 have signed. Let's get to 1,000!

First name

Last name

Email

Egham, TW20  
United Kingdom



- ☐ Share with Facebook friends  
☒ Display my name and comment on this petition

Sign this petition

By signing, you accept Change.org's [Terms of Service](#) and [Privacy Policy](#), and agree to receive occasional emails about campaigns on Change.org. You can unsubscribe at any time.



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Start a petition



# Study Space and Behaviour Observation (Nov 2017)



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# So how did we go about mapping...

- 3 observations a day at 11am, 3pm and 7pm for 7 days during the Autumn term
- Looked at which seats were occupied
- Monitored the noise
- Noted how people were working – was it collaboratively, individually, seated in groups but working quietly, etc...



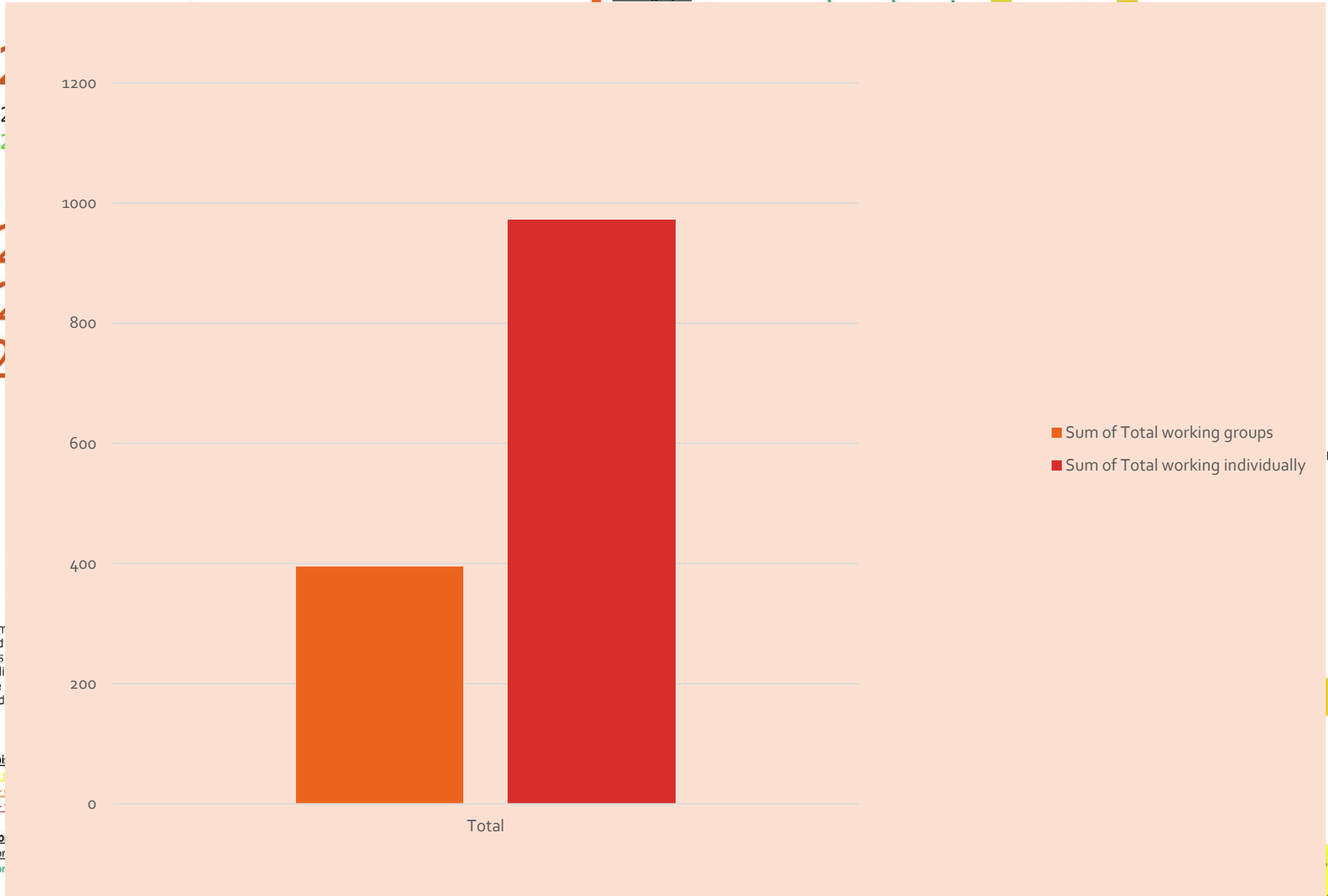
% of study spaces occupied  
at the time of the observations: 43%

Noise scale:  
1 - silent  
2 - quiet conversation  
3 - talking loudly

% of study spaces occupied  
at the time of the observations: 44%

Working style:

1 6 1 10 0 1 1



Comments  
noted  
levels  
new li  
noise  
would

Noi  
1 -  
2 -  
3 -

Wo  
wor  
wor

11.00 am  
WOODWARD WING  
SIDE

3.00 pm  
WOODWARD WING  
SIDE

# We learnt a lot about our students...

- Noise levels are as predicted and prompted by the interior design
- Library zones were established by library users very quickly
- 'Unwanted' noise comes mostly from the foyer, not from the people
- But if it comes from people - library staff are still expected to intervene...
- 80% occupied seats at our busiest times (we are not full)





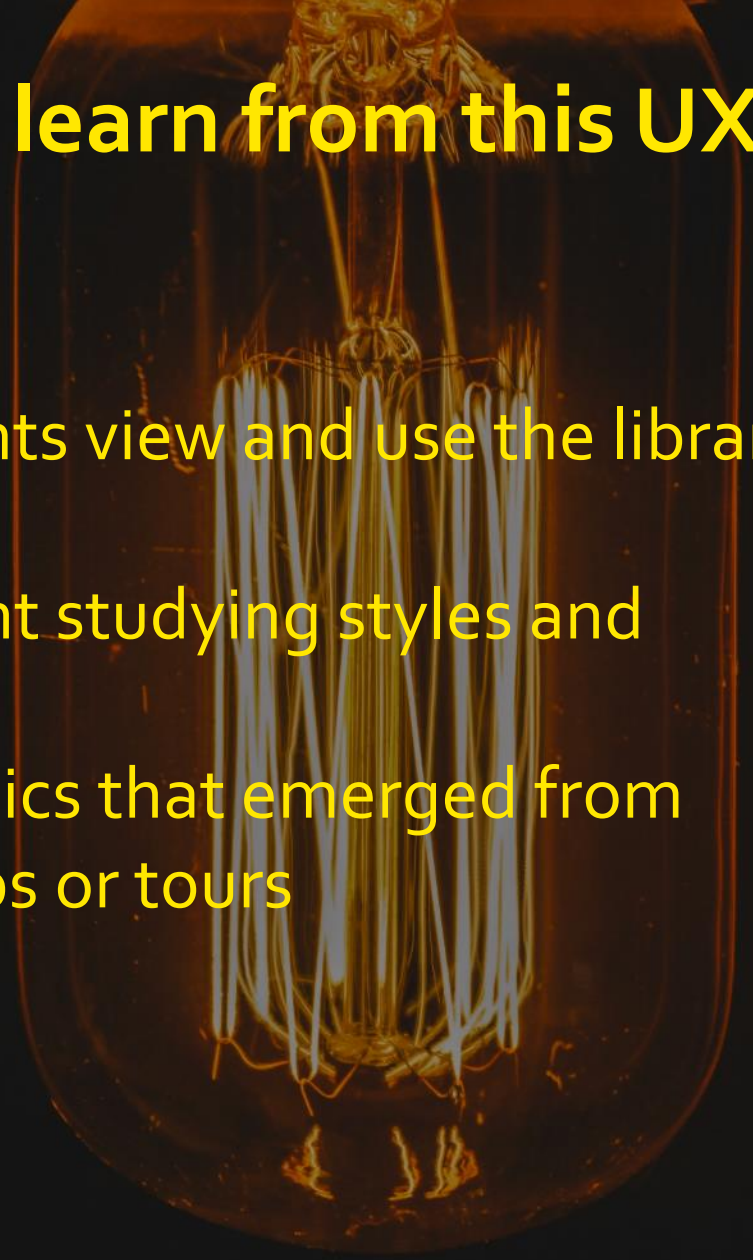
# Touchstone tours and cognitive maps (May 2018)



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# What did we hope to learn from this UX research?

- To understand how students view and use the library after a few months
- To learn about the different studying styles and preferences
- To analyse the distinct topics that emerged from discussions about the maps or tours



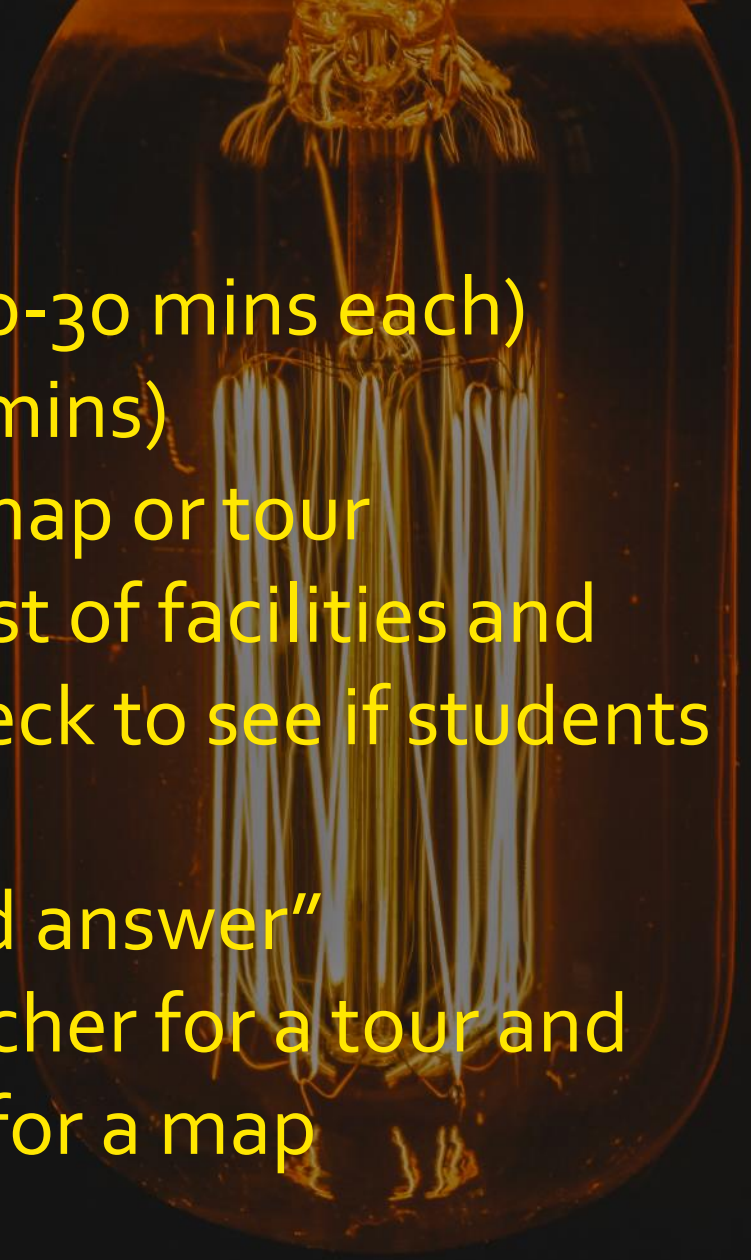


# Why did we choose touchstone tours and cognitive maps?

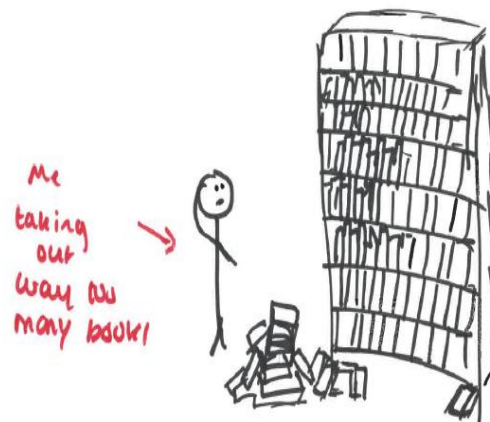
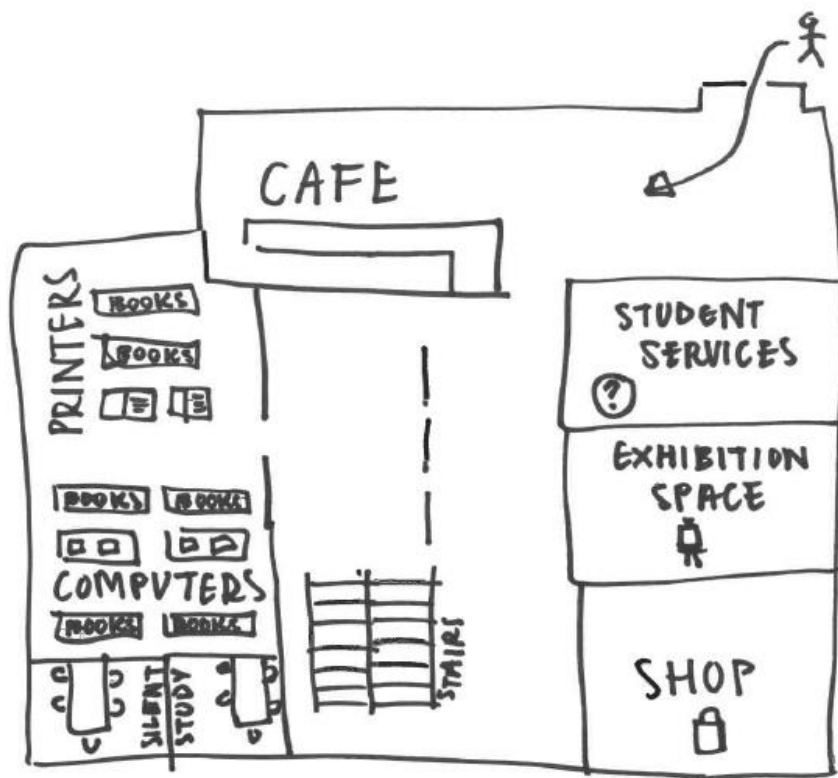
- Information provided by students is not prompted by questions, but rather comes out naturally through the process
- Library users decide themselves what is important for them and worth mentioning about the library.
- Therefore topics which arise during these conversations are more likely to be something significant to our library users, even if mentioned by 'just' five of 76 people.

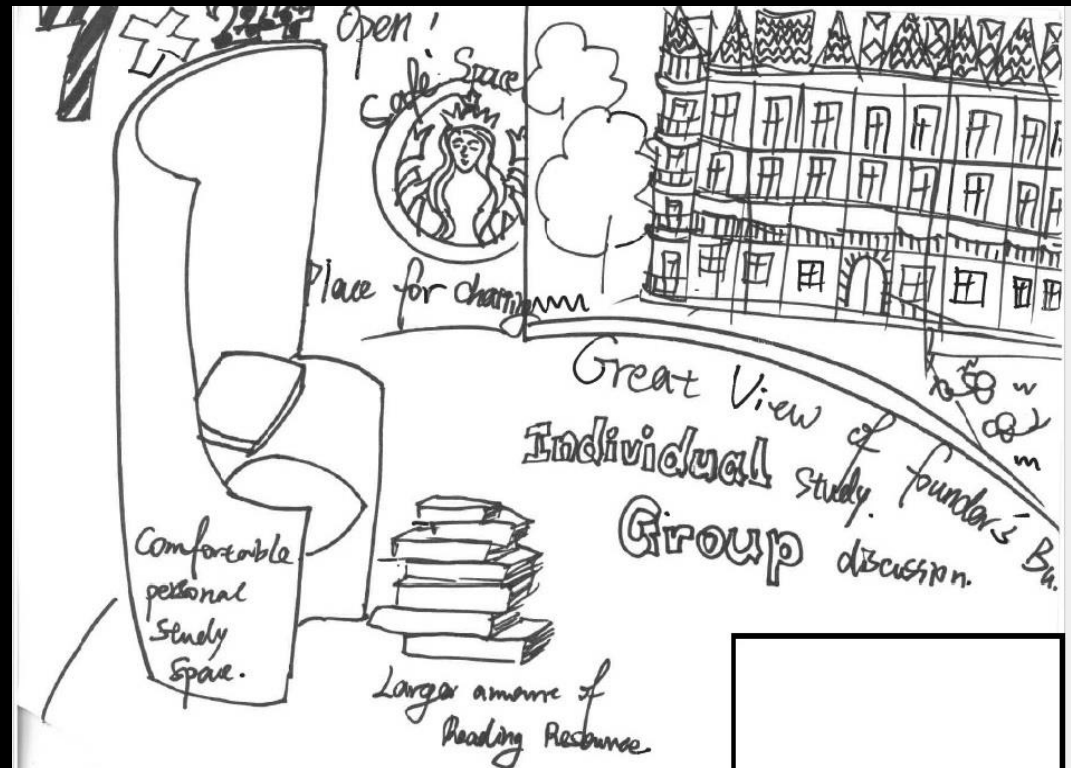
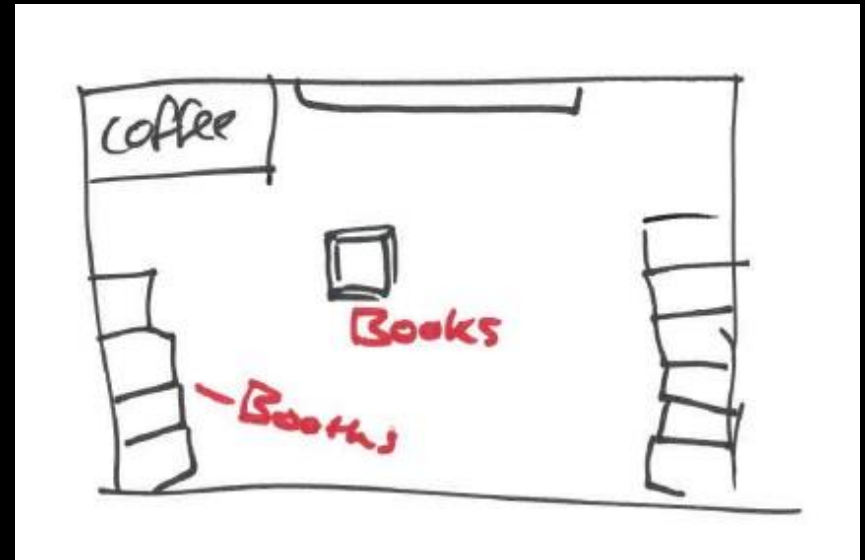
# The facts:

- 22 touchstone tours (10-30 mins each)
- 54 cognitive maps (10 mins)
- Discussion after each map or tour
- Also included a checklist of facilities and services we offer to check to see if students were aware of them
- No such thing as a “bad answer”
- Offered Starbucks voucher for a tour and chocolate/sweet prize for a map











# What did we learn?

- Still concerns about lack of space, particularly at busy times
- Confusion over High Use vs General Collection
- Lack of knowledge about the services we offered
- Navigation of the building is not intuitive and can feel overwhelming
- Students love the library, the furniture, the librarians and resources/services they did know about



# Welcome Week 2018



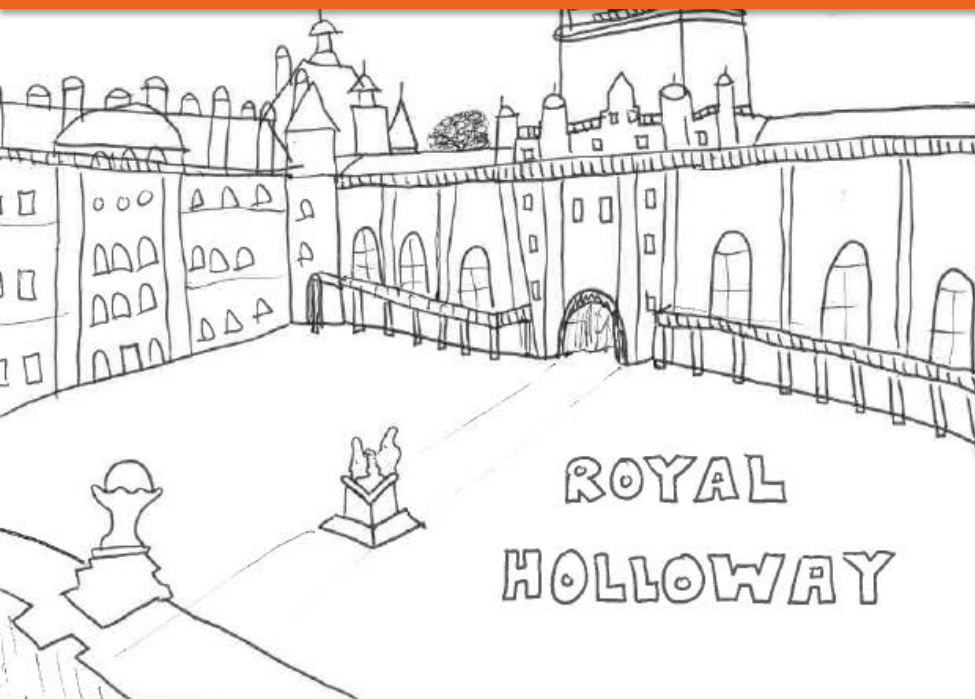
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# Your Welcome Week Story

- 2 week long exercise
- 14 mini-tasks, which ranged from taking photos of their favourite study space to placing emojis on where they liked best on campus, or simply filling in a diary pre-loaded with questions about the experience
- 13 finished entries (of 28 handed out)
- Offered £20 Amazon voucher upon completion of all the tasks

Aim: for us to improve the welcome week experience for future years





# Your Welcome Week Story – the findings

- A range of different students = a snapshot of different student experiences for Welcome Week
- Communication from across the College varied – some found it useful and well timed, for others this was not the case.
- Some found the campus big and uninviting at first, but got settled and things like Welcome Fairs helped
- People were friendly and helpful – community atmosphere was felt early on

# Your Welcome Week Story – the Library

Large and modern – so different from my high school library!

A masterpiece

Didn't attend the library induction, but would have been useful

Great atmosphere, good for productive studying



5. Visit the Library. Have a walk around on all of the floors. Don't be afraid to be nosey. After the visit - please write what do you think of the Library? Think about the other libraries you have used in the past - is this one different, if yes - why? Was it easy for you to find your way around? Is there some study space you would like to use once the academic year starts?

I Love that it is new and open 24/7, that really gives me the possibility to chose my own hours. However, like most of campus, it's too small for all the students that go here! It is quite easy finding my way around, and I like the silent parts of it.

I did not go to a library induction, usually I'm good at figuring things out by myself.

Unfortunately I was not able to attend the library induction by the librarian. But the library is very practical and is easy to understand and use.

On my library visit I actually took out a few books. A librarian on the second floor helped me and explained the 'High Use' section down stairs where the majority of my books were. I haven't had a library induction however I found it very simple to scan the books to take out. I like the fact it gives you a receipt so you can pin it on your board to remind you when they're due.

I did attend my library induction, and it was very useful. Learning how to use LibrarySearch was definitely needed, and I managed to find a very useful book for my first formative essay.

And I have to mention that the ~~assistant~~ librarians are just so kind and friendly, they ~~was~~ helped me initiatvely, which was different from the place where I use to study in. Besides I love the sofa in front of the ground floor where it is full of sunlight and great atmosphere.

What was UXpected and unUXpected?



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Just because the library has been  
built, it does not mean the work  
is over...



People really want clear directions...



So we had to improve our signage...



It is hard to get our messages  
“out” to users...





But we did expect that the library  
would be popular 😊





# Conclusions

- Our library spaces are being used as prompted by their design, but we need to show that & communicate it to users
- UX research informs our response to students' feedback and the decision making process (e.g. emphasising with signage the silent study spaces)
- UX research helps Library staff to know how library spaces are being used
- We got really good unprompted feedback about the helpfulness of library staff

# Questions?



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