WESTERN SYDNEY
UNIVERSITY

WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY COMPARISON
IT SERVICE QUALITY BENCHMARK SURVEY RESULTS

How We Performed in 2015

How we performed in 2015

The IT Service Quality Benchmark survey is conducted annually and allows universities across Australia and New Zealand to independently survey, measure and compare their progress against a standard set of IT service quality measures, based on student and/or staff feedback. For the fourth year Western Sydney University participated in the survey, seeking structured feedback from both students and staff on the quality of our IT services.

STUDENT FEEDBACK

In 2015 thirteen universities surveyed their students, with 730 Western Sydney U students sharing their views (4.97% response rate). Students were asked a range of benchmarking questions.

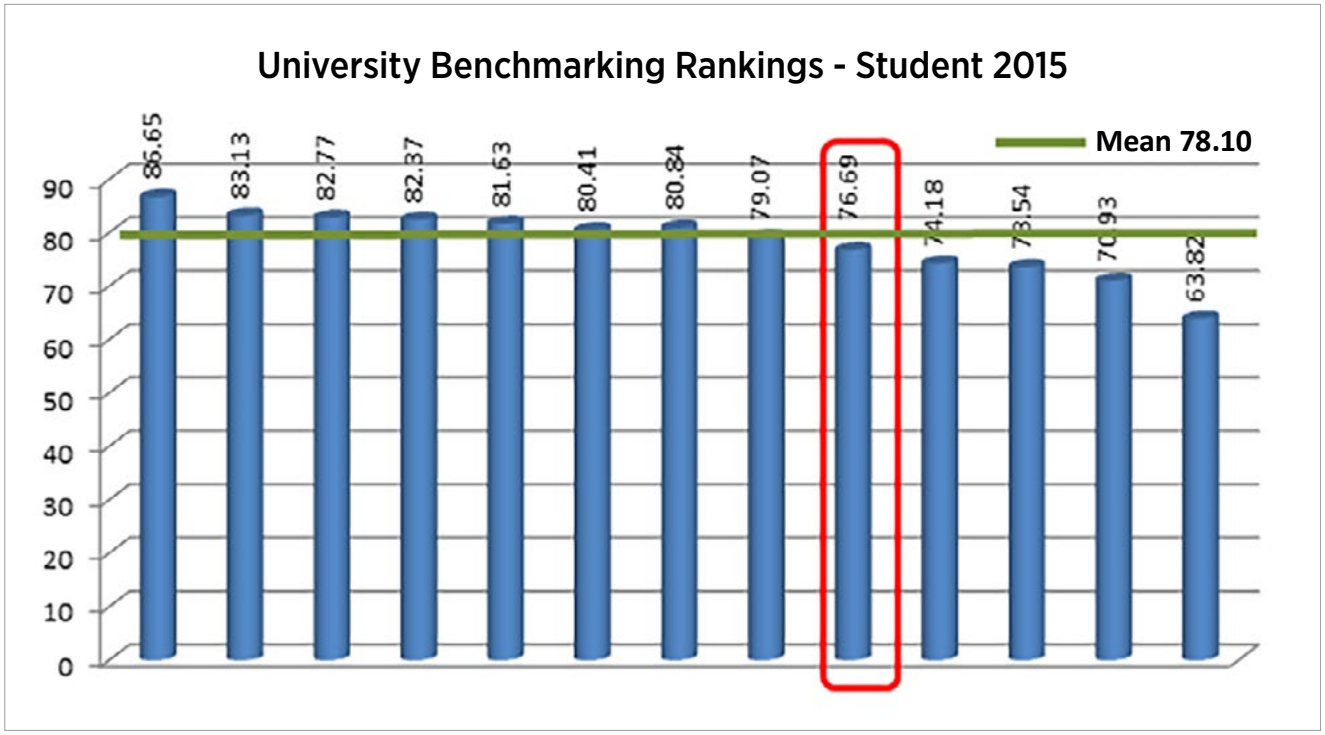
The benchmark score is based on the sum of the top two satisfaction scores for questions in relation to:

- → our **technical skills**
- → our **helpfulness**
- → how well we **understand the impact** of problems on students
- → our **questioning skills**

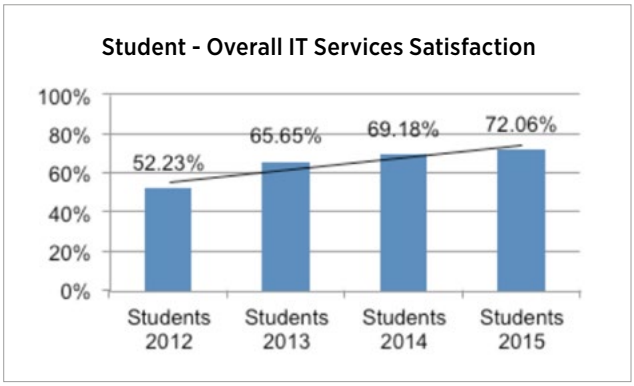
HOW WE COMPARE

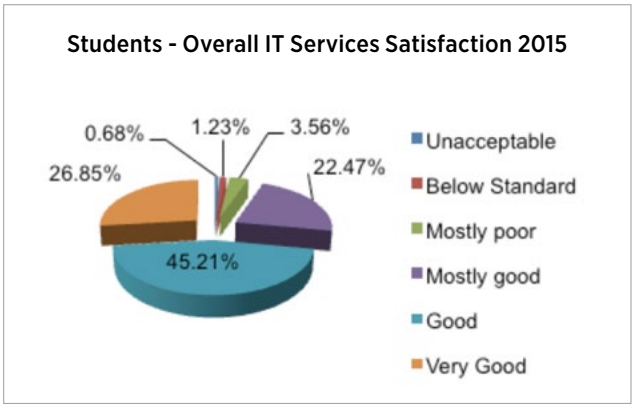
This year the average benchmark score was 78.10%, approximately 4.51% point increase from the 2014 average of 74.73%. This demonstrates that universities across the sector are actively focusing on improving IT service quality and seeking to become more competitive.

Western Sydney University achieved a benchmark score of 76.69% this year, which is a 0.70% point improvement on our 2014 result of 76.16%. This result places our University slightly below the sector average; however our overall ranking has been raised one place to 9th out of 13 universities from 10th out of 17 universities in 2014.

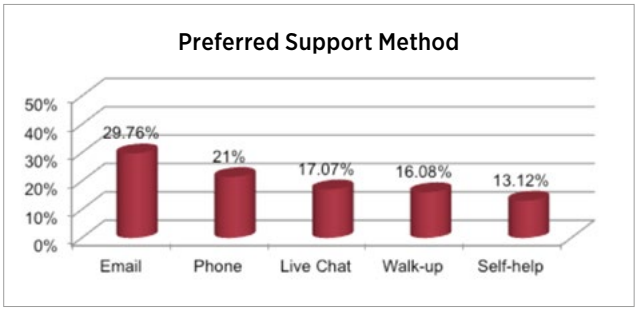


In response to the question *"What is your overall impression of the quality of service provided by the University IT support teams?"* the University has seen a slight improvement in the *"good"* and *"very good"* response groups, scoring a combined total of 72.06% which is a 2.88% point improvement from last year (69.18%).

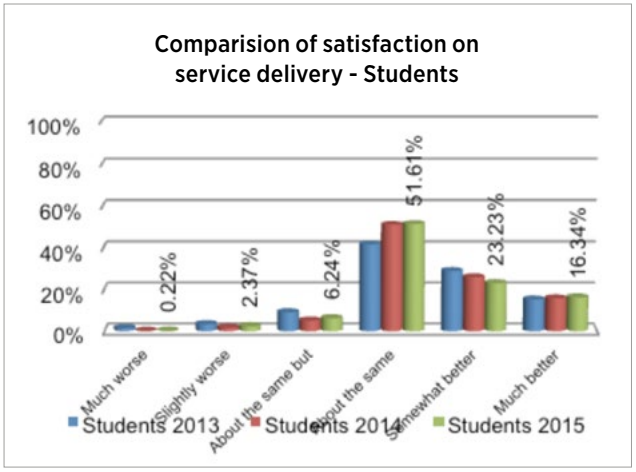


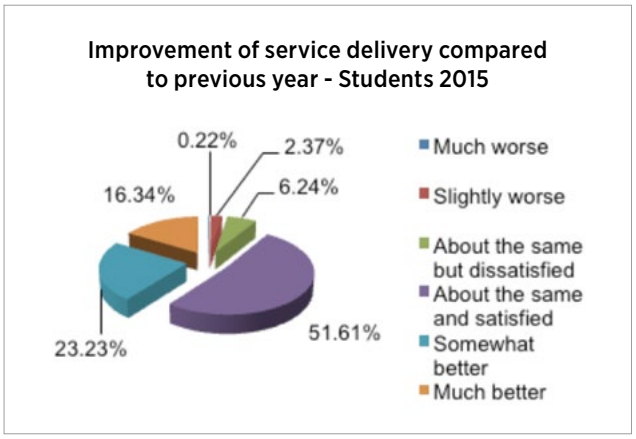


Approximately, 30% of students registered that their current preferred method of contacting the IT Service Desk is via email, followed by phone contact with 21%. The self-help option came in last with only 13.12% students listing this method as their preferred option.

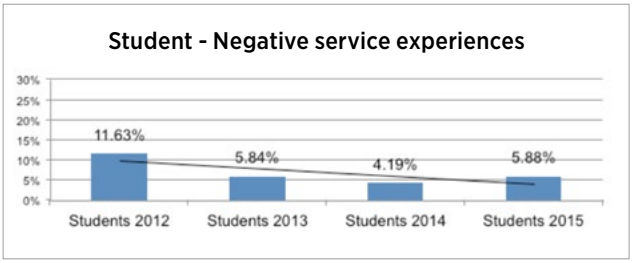


In response to the question *"The quality of service compared to last year is.."*, almost 40% of students reported that services had improved, a very slight decrease from almost 42% in 2014

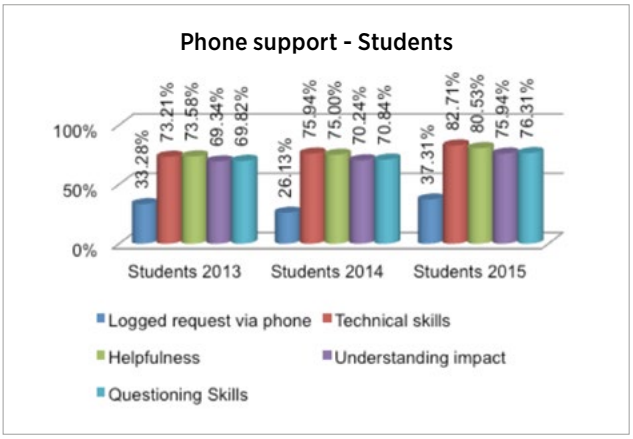


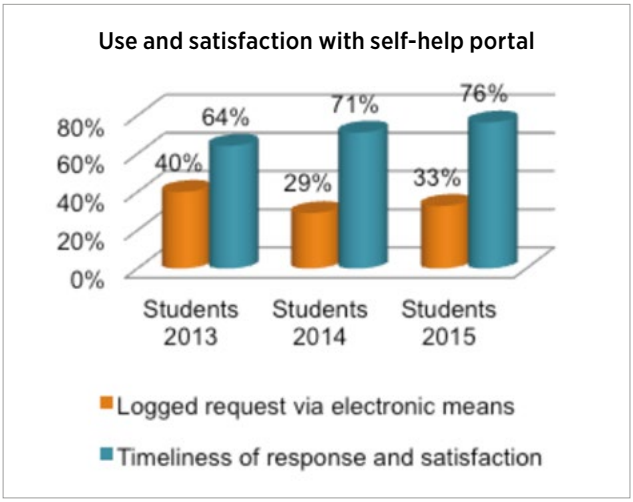


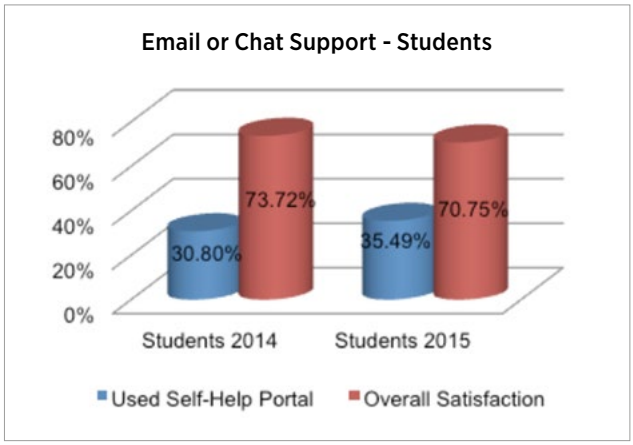
At the same time, the number of students who recorded bad experiences increased from 4.19% in 2014 to 5.88% in 2015 (1.69%). While this figure is below the industry standard target range of 10%, it is of concern and will be investigated with measures put in place throughout 2016 to address this issue.



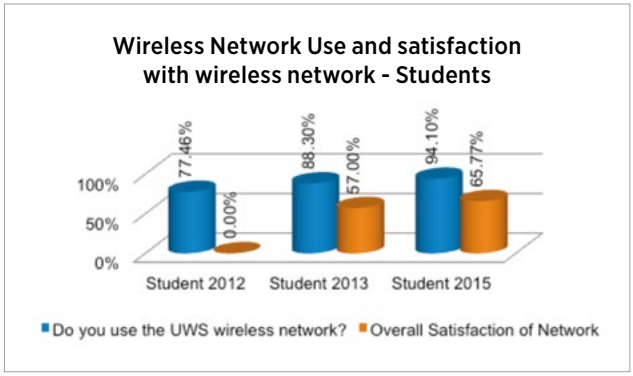
Student usage of the communication channels into the IT Service Desk, (self-help portal (MyIT), phone, email and chat) have all registered slight increases over the past year and are all now sitting within the mid 30% range. Conversely, most indicators across key reporting areas such as technical skills, helpfulness, and timeliness have mainly reported percentage rates increases and all now sit within the mid 70% to low 80% range.







94% of students who completed the survey have advised that they use the University's wireless network. Both usage of and general satisfaction with our network services have been steadily increasing since we first started collecting this information. However with a 65.77% overall satisfaction rating and several comments regarding high dropout rates, slow network speed, and lack of network coverage in some areas (across all campuses), wireless remains an area of concern and will be investigated throughout the coming year.



STUDENT FREE TEXT FEEDBACK

In addition to structured questions, students were also given the opportunity to provide free text responses to the following questions and identified the following themes:

Please describe a bad experience with IT Support

"Improve the speed and the dropouts in wifi. It's terrible"

There were 5% fewer responses to this question than were received last year, with the majority of comments centred around:

- poor technical and communication skills,

staff not fully understanding the impact, urgency, frustration, and added stress IT associated issues had on their studies,

- staff not being as helpful as students would like them to have been
- The University's wireless network was unsatisfactory
- issues took too long to resolve

Please comment on any recent experience you have had with IT Support. Eg. Any good or poor service or what IT support could do to improve.

"The person that helped me submit a video recording was very understanding and took his time with helping me. This helped me in not stressing out as the assignment was due within the hour."

"Please provide workshops for those not so at home with constantly changing technology...particularly mature age students (over 50yrs) The library has tutors available a couple of times a week for writing and maths support, the occasional similar opportunity for IT would be a boon"

Comments received for this question were mainly to report positive experiences where issues were dealt with quickly from helpful, friendly, knowledgeable and interested staff members. A small percentage of comments were negative.

One interesting recommendation received was for workshops to be conducted throughout the semester to provide hands on support and teach simple IT tips and tricks on the use of vUWS, MyIT Portal and other software related issues and especially designed for the non-it savvy user.

Please comment on your experience with the IT Self-help/ Knowledge Base. For example, comment on the ease of use, the relevance of information or what needs improvement.

"Very easy to use, information was easy to find And relevant to my issue"

75% fewer responses than last year were received for this question with the focus moving away from what we could be doing better to the majority of comments advising our self-help knowledge base is

- Clear and easy to use
- Provided the knowledge and instructions required
- Good 1st point of call to help resolve issues or find relevant information

There were only a minor number of comments advising

- broken or missing links
- finding specific information sometimes difficult or impossible

Please comment on your experience with email or web form support. For example, comment on the accuracy, tone, clarity and completeness of the response.

"My experience of using the web form was great. I received two responses in a timely manner, and the issue was mentioned to another department that it affected on my behalf. This was incredibly thoughtful and showed a good understanding of the issue and its ramifications."

This question was not asked in last year's survey, however approximately 14% of students surveyed chose to supply comments

Of the approximate 100 responses received

- 22% stated IT Support responded quickly to emails and web/chat support
- 10% stated IT Support did not respond quickly to emails and web/chat support
- 11% commented that IT Support were helpful and friendly while
- 7% disagreed with the above statement
- 6% of student responses advised of receiving accurate and helpful information while
- 6% of students advised that they received no response from IT Support from emails or chat requests submitted

Do you have any comments or suggestions regarding the University's wireless service?

This is the first time this question has been asked in the Benchmarking Survey and elicited the most responses. While many comments were received with themes such as "better than last year", "mostly good" and "easy to connect", the majority of responses made comment on

- Wireless speed is too slow

Bad coverage, lots of "dead zones" especially away from main buildings

- Access problems – unable to connect
- Drop outs or disconnects/reconnects too often even when in teaching spaces during class times

Many students made comment that they would like to see (better) coverage away from buildings in areas such as

- surrounding sporting facilities
- under trees and in quiet grassy break out areas

STAFF FEEDBACK

A total of 23 universities surveyed their staff in 2015. Over 5,000 Western Sydney University staff members were invited to participate, with 759 responding to share their views (13.66% response rate).

As with the student survey, the benchmark score is based on the sum of the top two satisfaction scores for questions in relation to:

- our **technical skills**
- our **helpfulness**
- how well we **understand the impact** of problems on students
- our **questioning skills**

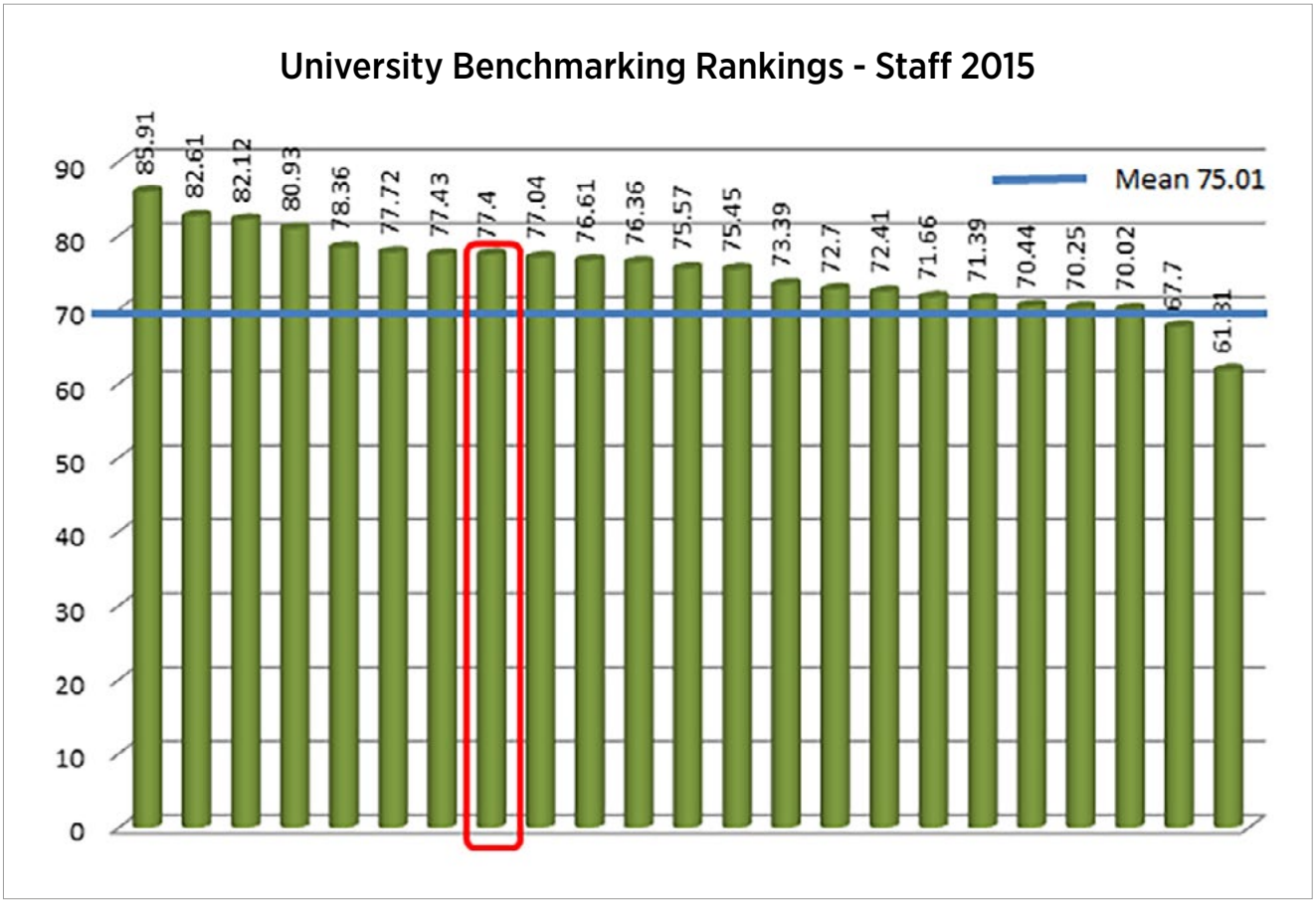
HOW WE COMPARE

This year the average benchmark score was 75.01%. This represents an 8.73% point increase from the 2014 average of 68.99%, demonstrating that universities across the sector are actively focusing on improving the delivery of IT services to their staff

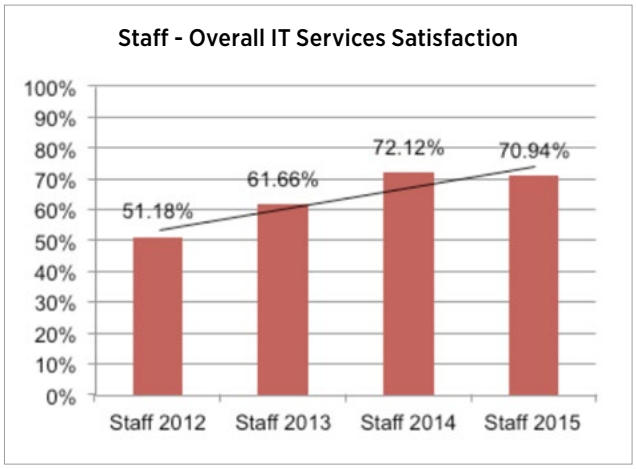
For 2015 Western Sydney University achieved a benchmark score of 77.40%, a 7.37% point improvement from 2014 (72.09%). This result places the University as the 11th most improved university for staff feedback in 2015 and keeps us above the sector average for the second time in a row since participating in this survey. Our overall ranking has risen accordingly from 9th out of 25 universities in 2014 to 8th out of 23 universities participating this year.

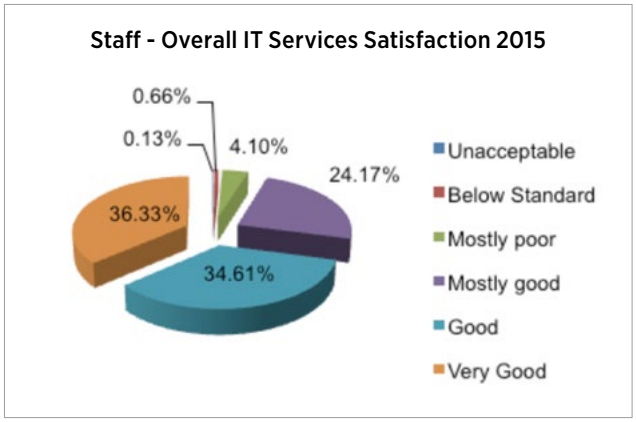
"It drops out all the time - the connection seems unstable on all my devices (mobile, laptop and tablet). And when I am connected, it's quite slow"

"Hawkesbury has a few black areas, you don't receive service around certain areas; football field, carparks, away from buildings, which when you're trying to relax away from the chaos is frustrating"

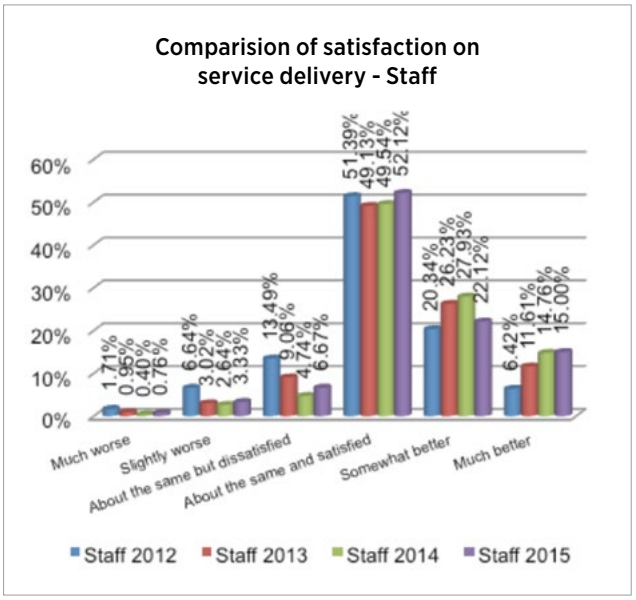


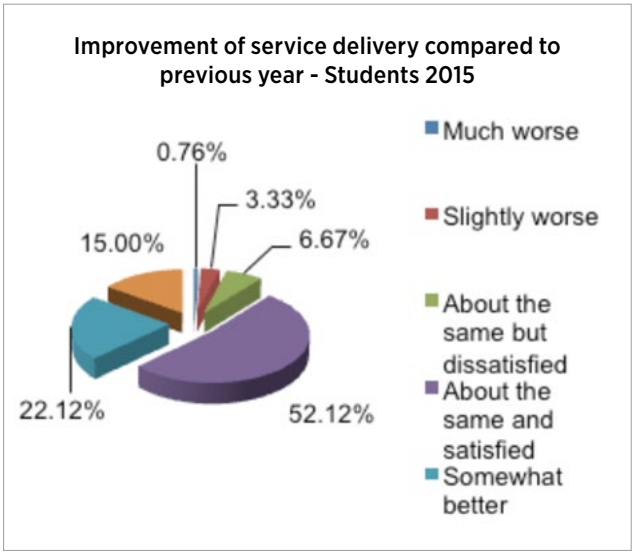
Staff response to the question *"What is your overall impression of the quality of service provided by the University IT support teams?"* has seen significant improvements in the *"Good"* and *"Very good"* response groups over the first three years of this survey. However in 2015, these ratings appear to have levelled out and when added together recorded a slight downturn (-1.18% points) to return a score of 70.94%. However, the trending line is still recording a steady increase.



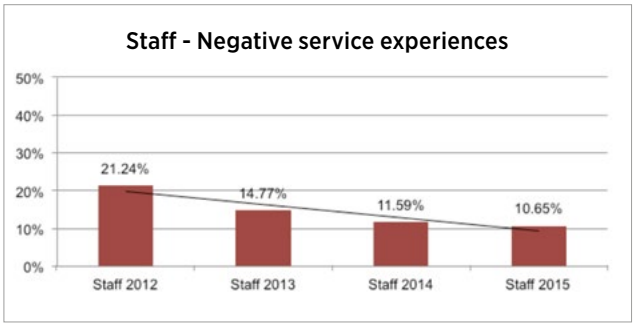


This year, 37% of staff reported that they believed IT service quality had improved from the previous year. This represents a downward turn of -5.57% as reported in last year's survey. Again, for the fifth year in a row around 50% of all staff members surveyed report that our services remain *"About the same* (as last year) *but are satisfied* (with our services).

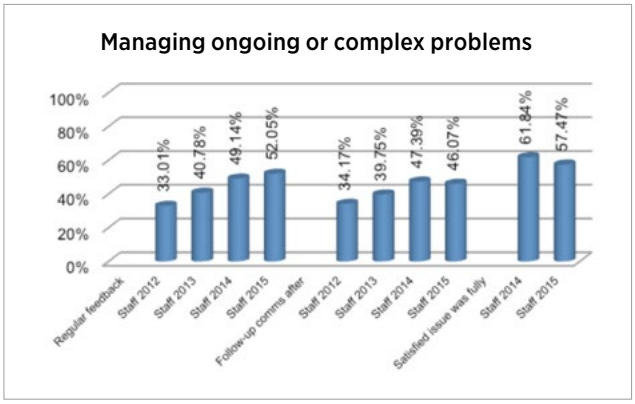




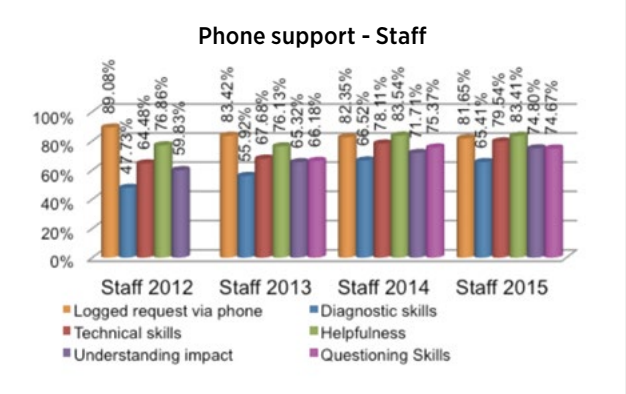
At the same time the number of staff who had bad experiences fell slightly from 11.59% to 10.65%, a -0.94% point improvement. This is a good result and gets us closer to our aim of reducing bad experiences to below the industry standard of 10%.

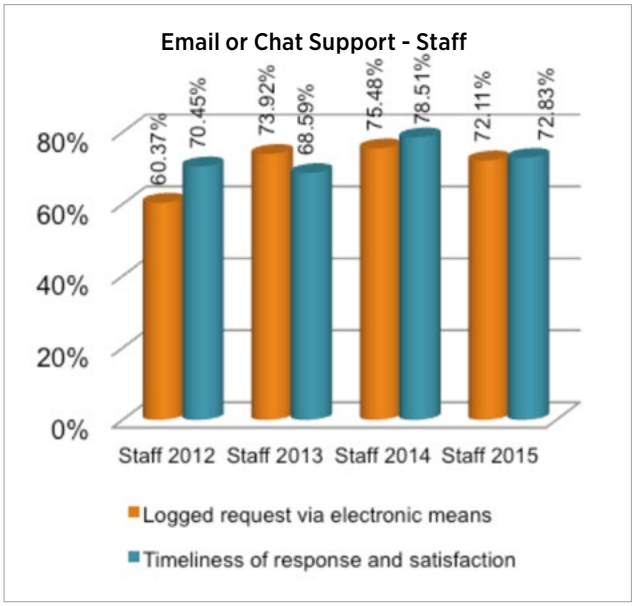


While slight improvements have been recorded in the way ITDS manages complex or ongoing problems, less than 50% of all staff surveyed responded that they received regular or follow-up feedback after resolution and only 57.47% reported that they believed their problem or issue had been satisfactorily and fully resolved. These procedural areas are currently under review and processes will be put in place to address these issues throughout 2016.

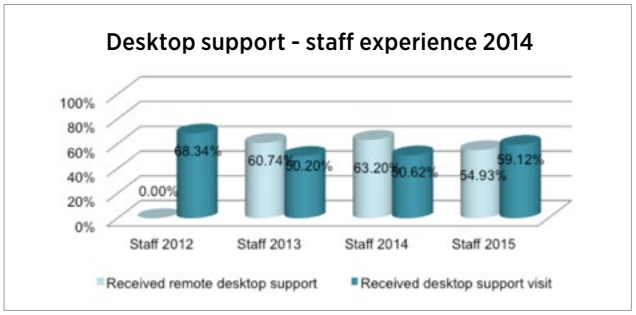


Usage and satisfaction with the communication channels into ITDS of phone and chat supports and self-help portal have mainly held steady on numbers recorded in earlier years, with perhaps only a slight downward trend. While around 82% of staff have reported that they use, have used or generally contact IT support via the phone and 72% also acknowledge using, use or generally contact IT support via email or chat support services, it is interesting to note that these same staff members reported that only 57% have used, use or generally contact IT Support via the self-help portal to log a service desk ticket.

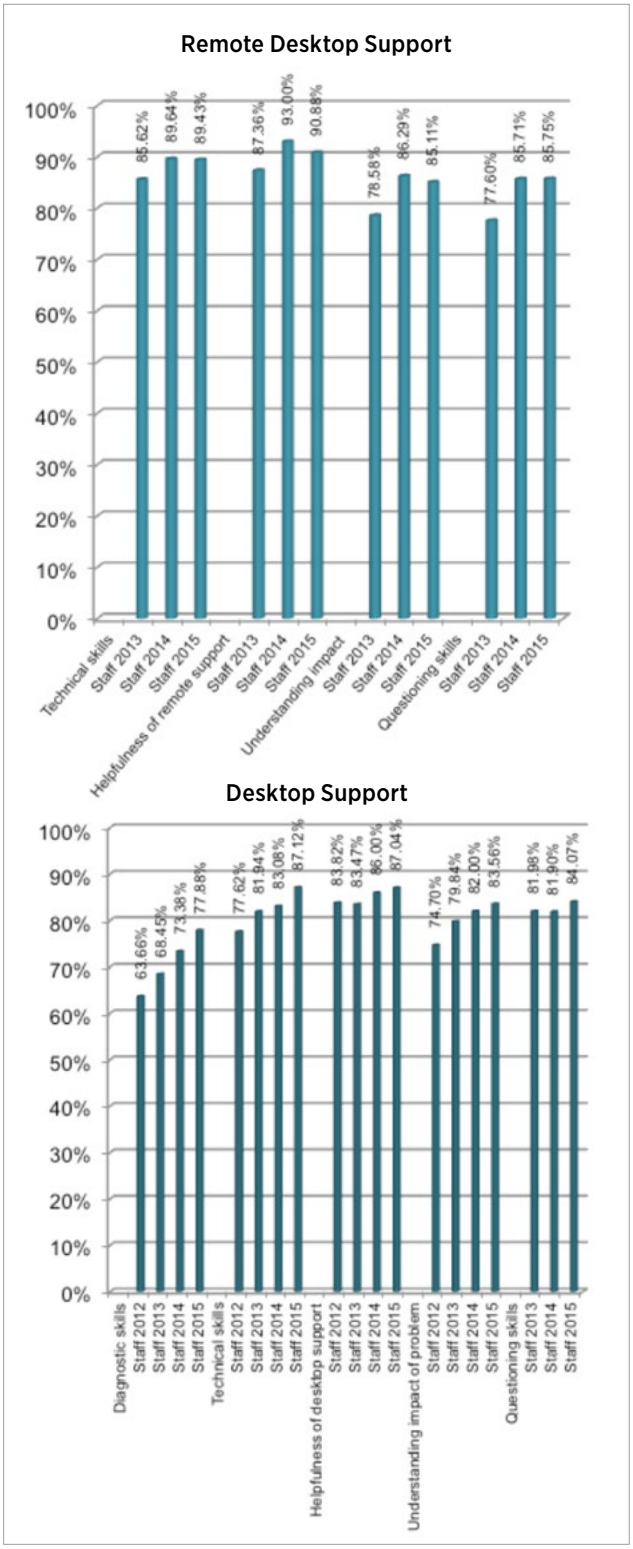




Staff reported that they received a decrease in remote desktop support over the last 12 months down to almost 55% from 63% in 2014. (-8.27% points) It is interesting to note, however, that desktop support visits increased by almost the same amount up 8.5% points to 59.12%, the second highest number since these statistics have been collected.



Staff reported that their satisfaction in both remote and physical desktop support has remained fairly constant over the past year. For the majority of the key reporting areas, satisfaction ratings have been recorded mainly in the high 80s to low 90s, however, remote desktop support is showing a slight decline while physical desktop support is trending slightly upwards.



STAFF FREE TEXT FEEDBACK

In addition to structured questions, staff were also given the opportunity to provide free text responses to the following questions and identified the following themes:

Please describe a bad experience with IT Support Staff

"My Laptop had to be rebuilt as it had crashed. Trying to get an ETA on when this would be done was difficult, and my executive assistant had to nag quite a bit to get my computer back, and when it was brought back, the staff member bringing it back was quite grumpy about it"

We received approximately the same number of responses to this question as was received in 2014 (71 vrs. 75) with the majority of comments centred around

- Slow or untimely resolution to tickets
- Poor technical skills
- Poor communication skills
- Unhelpful/unfriendly service
- Requests either ignored or set to resolved without any action, communication or resolution
- Complex issues being ignored requiring customers to resolve themselves
- Poor service during end of lease turnover process
- Poor service with warranty issues

Please comment on your experience with electronic support. For example, comment on what you thought of the accuracy, tone, clarity and completeness of the communication.

"It was ok, but they are very quick to want to resolve the issue, even when it is not clear as to whether the information they have provided resolves the issue - my example was someone with problems accessing the VPN. The response was to send the fact sheet, and close the service now request."

This question was not asked in last year's survey, however approximately 22% of staff members surveyed chose to supply comments

- Of the approximate 165 responses received

21% stated IT Support responded quickly to emails and web/chat support

- 16% stated IT Support did not respond quickly to emails and web/chat support
- 13% commented that IT Support were helpful and friendly while
- 4% advised they did not have confidence in the technical skills of support staff
- 15% of staff advised they received polite, professional and helpful service
- 10% of staff advised that they received no response or resolution from IT Support from emails or chat requests submitted
- 7% stated they received no personalised communication

→ 7% advised they received good communication while

→ 7% responded they received poor communication

Please comment on any recent experience you have had with IT Support For example, any comments on good or poor service or what IT Support could do to improve

"Listen to what the staff are telling them about the issue.

When you say you are going to call or visit, call or visit, don't leave it for a week.

Finish the job properly and stay in contact, don't just leave half way through.

Introduce yourself properly - don't just wander around asking questions without saying you are from IT - we are a building open to the public and we don't always know who you are"

"Somewhat easy but not always finding what I need when I search "

"Hard to find relevant data - seems to be a big bucket of "stuff""

We received 400 comments in this section with almost 82% (81.95%) positive comments including the following themes

→ Quick, reliable and friendly service

→ good IT technical skills

→ good communication skills

Of the remaining 18% of responses received the common themes for improvement are

→ Listening skills – listen to the customer and the entire explanation of the problem or issue before commenting or offering solutions (as these may have already been tried)

→ Communication skills – tickets need to be updated with information more frequently or just a note to advise action is still being taken to resolve issue

→ Keep appointments and/or promises to customers – arrive on site at a time agreed to by both parties

→ Do not assume that the customer has
- IT knowledge, or
- does not have IT knowledge

→ Processes involving the turnover of equipment at end of leasing.

Please comment on your experience with the IT Self-help/ Knowledge Base

"Can be difficult to find help sheets on certain problems with some material appearing outdated or with broken links - often prefer to contact the IT help desk and speak to a staff member directly."

"IT procurement is far too slow! It took months to get my computer after ordering. Asking permission to purchase software is too slow and inefficient. When I found a way to save the university hundreds of dollars on a software product, it was met with undue scepticism after a week of foot-dragging and non-response."

Responses to this question increased approximately 77% on last year's figures. This may be an indication of an increase of usage and awareness of this facility over the past 12 months.

Of the approximate 170 responses received

→ 47% stated
- it is difficult to use
- the search engine is not intuitive enough
- not easy to find required information

while

→ 25% stated
- it is easy to use
- easy to find required information

and

- 5% stated it was "OK"

A similar ratio in numbers was found with

→ 12% of staff members advising the information found was
- not helpful
- out of date
- broken links

→ 7% stated the information was
- helpful
- informative
- useful

Do you have any comments or suggestions regarding the University's wireless service?

"It is improving but there are still 'dead' spots. My office has been one so I do not ever bother connecting here unless essential for some reason"

"Outdoor wireless would be a great addition.
Wireless saturation and performance could do with improvement"

This is the first time this question has been asked in the Benchmarking Survey. Similar responses to those received by our student population (listed above) were received covering similar themes such as "better than last year" and "easier to connect", however, the majority of responses made comment on

→ Wireless speed is too slow

→ Bad coverage, lots of "dead zones" especially away from main buildings

→ Access problems – unable to connect

→ Drop outs or disconnects/reconnects too often even when in teaching spaces during class times and inside office environments

Again as with our students, many staff members made comment that they would like to see (better) coverage away from buildings in areas such as

→ In-between buildings and carparks

→ surrounding sporting facilities

→ under trees and in quiet grassy break out areas

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