

# Higher Education Training Needs Analysis

October 2004

## Survey for Library & Information Services Staff

### Introduction

This section of the survey was designed for librarians and information services staff, including staff concerned with cataloguing, periodicals, issuing, collections, special collections, reference, archives and similar. In total 262 responses were gathered from staff in every participating institution. As was to be expected, and as was found in other parts of the HETNA survey, Glasgow and Edinburgh Universities again fielded the highest number of submissions.

### Section 1: Your Post

#### Question 1: Institution

Institution	Responses	Percentage
University of Aberdeen	4	2
University of Abertay Dundee	18	7
Bell College	3	1
University of Dundee	25	10
Edinburgh College of Art	6	2
University of Edinburgh	39	15
Glasgow Caledonian University	15	6
Glasgow School of Art	2	1
University of Glasgow	42	16
Heriot-Watt University	11	4
Napier University	11	4
The Open University in Scotland	2	1
University of Paisley	7	3
Queen Margaret University College	8	3
Robert Gordon University	9	3
Royal Scottish Academy of Music & Drama	6	2
Scottish Agricultural College	4	2
University of St Andrews	18	7
University of Stirling	8	3
University of Strathclyde	21	8
UHI Millennium Institute	2	1
Not specified	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>262</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 1: Responses from individual institutions**

## Question 2: Basic facts about respondents

Unlike the academic survey, respondents to the Library & Information Services survey were mainly female, as illustrated in Fig 1, below. Males made up only one quarter of responses received for this cohort.

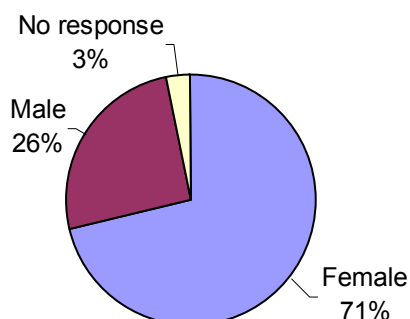


Fig 1: Staff Responses by Gender (N=262)

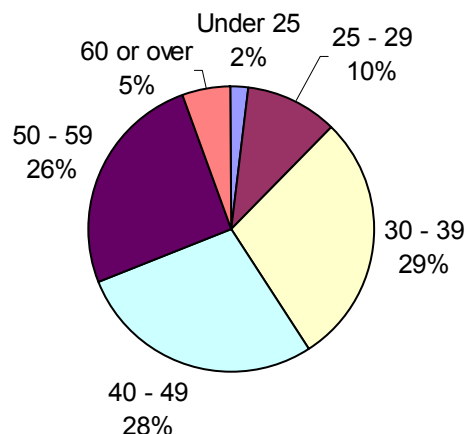


Fig 2: Staff responses by Age (N=262)

With respect to age distribution, an almost equal balance was achieved between the three age groups of 30 to 39, 40 to 49 and 50 to 59, as shown in Fig 2.

## Questions 3 to 5: Work categories and Job titles

When asked which category best described their main work area (Question 3), a broad variety of responses was recorded, as shown in Fig 4, with the largest category of Library Assistant occurring in 32 percent of cases. 53 persons made up the 18 percent of respondents who felt their job type did not fit into the categories supplied, and selected 'Other'. The largest free text job categories that were suggested (Question 4) for 'Other' included three persons who indicated that their job was mainly administrative, eleven who were working on various IT-related projects or providing user support, and four on the enquiry desk. One person at Edinburgh University described their position as a 'Metadata Coordinator, and the main job of one person from Robert Gordon's was concerned with providing services to disabled students and specialising in assistive technology. 72 percent of all respondents indicated that they worked directly within main libraries or information services departments within universities (Question 5). The remaining individuals are employed mainly within smaller departmental library or information services.

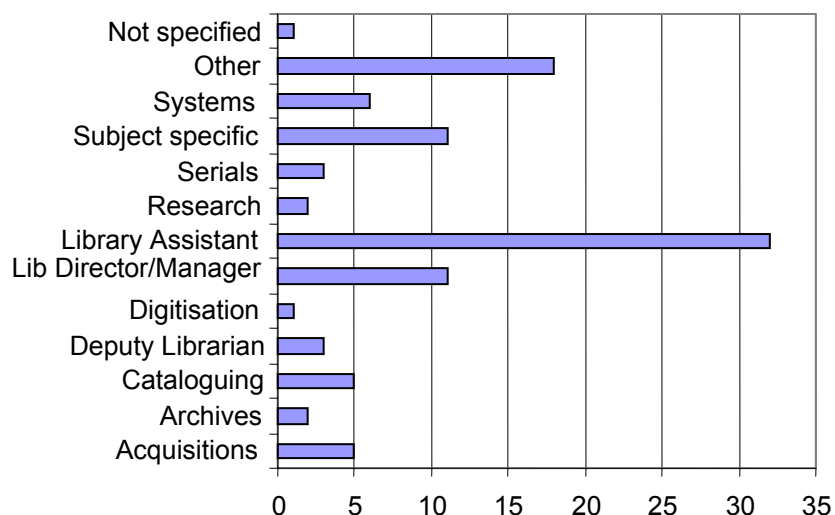


Figure 3: Which category best describes your main work area? (percentages, N=262)

### Question 6: Membership of professional bodies or organisations

The level of membership of professional bodies or organisations is as indicated in Fig 4. Where people had indicated 'Yes' a large majority cited membership of the Chartered Institute of Library & Information Professionals (CILIP). The rest varied widely, with some mentioning ALT, and four belonging to the Society of Archivists.

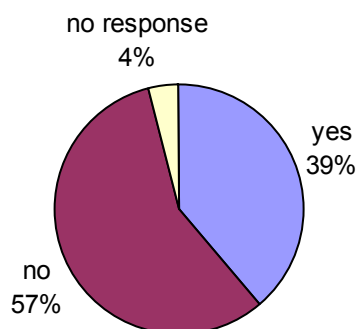


Fig 4: Are you a member of a professional body or organisation? (N=262)

### Question 7: Qualifications in Online Learning

Eight percent of respondents to the questionnaire for library and information services staff claimed a qualification in online learning. Perhaps surprisingly, this is double the proportion of academics and academic-related respondents who did so, at four percent. However, a close analysis of the responses given shows that the European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL) was the most popular (identified by 41% of those claiming a qualification in online learning). On balance, as ECDL is not actually a qualification in online learning, the relatively high numbers (compared to academics) citing ECDL may indicate their intention to give information about qualifications attained *by means of* online learning technologies, rather than *in* online learning itself.

Some of this wide interpretation of what is meant by a qualification in online learning may be explained by the fact that, although there have been several attempts to establish a qualification that could become a generally-accepted and respected standard, none has achieved the ubiquitous recognition of ECDL in a different area.

Apart from ECDL, a couple of respondents were studying with the Open University, and a small number of MScs and postgraduate diplomas had been achieved.

### **Question 8: Access to hardware and facilities**

Noteworthy within Question 8 are the perceptions of extremely high levels of availability of computers for exclusive use (81%) and even higher confidence (90%) in using computers at work. This may be indicative of high investment in the recent past by universities in infrastructure and equipment, and also possibly of the way in which the use of computers has become pervasive, even unavoidable, in the everyday working lives of respondents. The number of positive reactions is only slightly less than those received from academic staff when they were asked the same questions: at 95% and 91% respectively. As further confirmation of the degree of investment over recent years, 88% of respondents did not agree that their capabilities were limited by the powers of their computers.

Do you.....	Yes%	No%
...have exclusive use of a computer (or workstation) at work?	81	15
...share a computer with others?	34	55
...have access to a room with computers for teaching?	62	28
...feel that your capabilities are limited by the power of your computer?	12	80
...feel confident using computers in your work?	90	4

**Table 2: Access to equipment (N=262)**

### **Question 9: Using computers**

Having enquired into issues connected with the availability and quality of computer equipment, Question 9 enquires into the uses that respondents make of computers.

In the context of work, do you use computers.....	Yes%	No%	N/R% *
...to find information or resources?	97	<1	0
...to communicate with colleagues?	97	<1	0
...to administer learning resources?	53	15	29
...to communicate with students?	72	9	16
...to support student learning?	47	14	35
...to assess student progress?	8	35	53
...to improve accessibility for people with special needs?	24	31	40

**Table 3: Use made of computers (N=262)**

\* N/R = no response

Practically all respondents admitted using computers to find information and communicate with colleagues. Although not teaching staff, at 72%, this cohort demonstrated that it is normal work practice also to use computers to communicate with students. As would be expected, a large percentage (47%) is involved in the support of student learning, but only a small minority (8%) claims to use computers to assess student progress. Academics were not provided with a 'not applicable' box with respect to improving accessibility for people with special needs as the survey designers considered that *all* academics had a possibility of using computers in this way in support of the learner. However, library-related staff were provided with a 'not applicable' choice as it was considered that some specialised jobs may require little direct contact with the learner. Therefore, the number of persons *not* positively asserting that they were using computers to improve accessibility in this group was 76% (24% claiming

unambiguously that they were using computers in this way for persons with special needs). Among lecturers, 32% responded 'yes' and 63% 'no' to the same question.

23 persons felt that their use of computers fell into additional categories to the ones offered. Noteworthy among these were the 35% of these who used computers for cataloguing purposes. Among the others, 17% used computers for system administration and single responses were received for such activities as buying books, attracting students, promotion and marketing.

### **Question 10: ICT Skills**

This set of questions enquired into respondents' ICT skills. ICT activities were listed in roughly increasing order of complexity and respondents were invited to respond as indicated in Table 4, below:

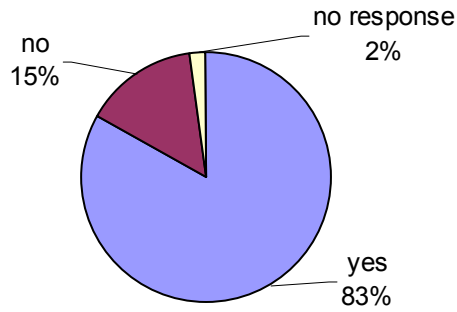
I can.....	do with confidence %	know how to %	would like to learn %
...store files in folders and retrieve them from a computer	66	30	1
...create documents using a word processing application (eg Word)	75	22	1
...create tables in a word processor	54	32	8
...insert images and graphics into word processing documents	47	33	14
...insert hyperlinks in word processing documents	44	28	21
...create spreadsheets (using for example Excel)	40	38	14
...use functions in a spreadsheet	26	46	20
...create databases (using for example Access)	17	37	34
...create presentations (using for example PowerPoint)	32	36	22
...use email	77	20	3
...attach files to an email message	74	22	1
...search the web for information	77	20	3
...create my own web pages	20	27	42

**Table 4: ICT Skills (N=262)**

The highest indications of training need, among those listed, was the wish to know how to create webpages (42%), to create databases (34%), and to create presentations (22%). Perhaps it is indicative of the creative predisposition of this staff group that the verb 'to create' was used to describe all three of these areas of interest. It is also certain to reflect a fundamental requirement in the professional lives of these respondents to make information available to others. The desire to create webpages gathered top score among academics also (40%) when they were asked similarly which ICT-related activity they would most like to learn. Greatest confidence shown with respect to these activities was in connection with using email and searching for information on the web (joint top at 77%) and creating documents in Word. Again, the top scorer for high confidence mirrored the academic survey exactly: using email (74% for academics).

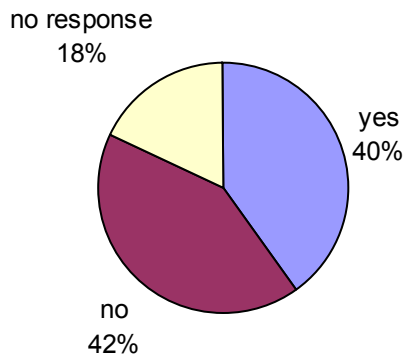
### **Question 11: Computers at home**

The large majority of library and information services staff had access to a computer at home.



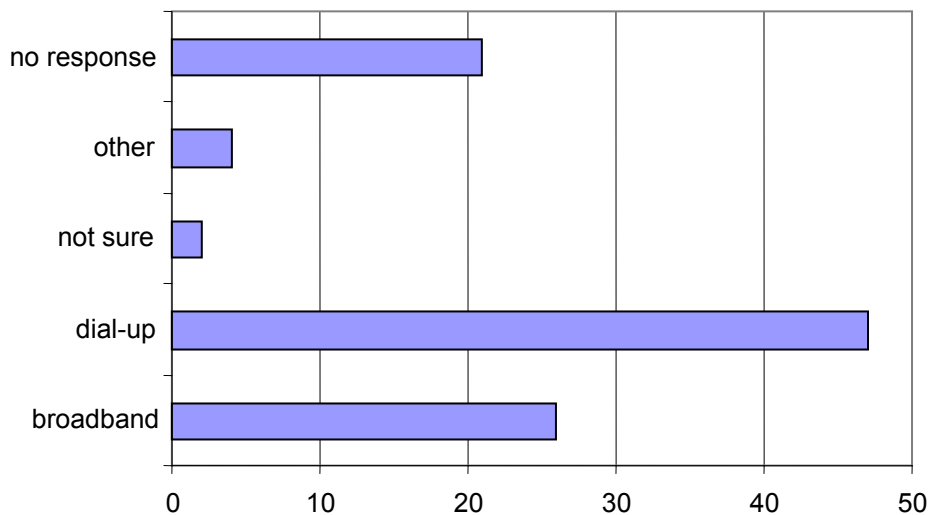
**Fig 5: Computers in the home**

Of these, 40% agreed that their home computers were used for work-related purposes. This is markedly different to responses gathered from academics, 91% of whom admitted to having computers at home, and a huge proportion of these (84%) indicating that these were used for work-related purposes.



**Fig 6: Do you use your computer at home for work related activity?**

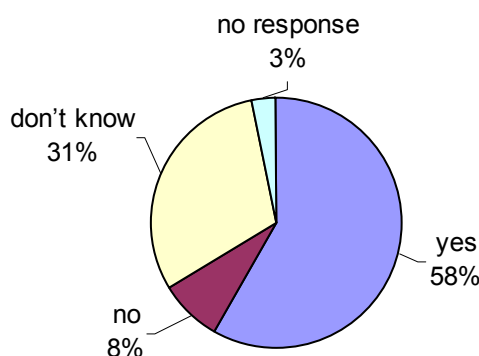
By contrast, the numbers of staff having access to the internet via their home computers was roughly similar to academics with 78% responding yes, 5% responding no. (Academics: 83% and 8% respectively). When the survey asked what type of internet connection respondents had, the answers were recorded as shown in Fig 7. These mirror very closely responses from academics.



**Fig 7: The types of internet connection used at home (percentage, N=262)**

### Question 12: Virtual Learning Environments

At 58%, slightly more library and related staff were aware that their institution had purchased a VLE than academic staff (at 50%), as shown in Fig 8. Similarly, slightly fewer (at 31%) admitted that they did not know if a VLE was in place (compared to 40% of academics). This may be expected in view of the professional interest of librarians in the availability of information and resources. The high proportion of 'don't knows' to this question indicates a likely need for staff development awareness of VLE-related activities within institutions.



**Fig 8: Does your institution or department have a VLE? (N=262)**

The next subsection of Question 12 probed further into exactly which VLE was in place. The responses were as shown in Table 5.

VLE product	Responses	Percentage
Learnwise	1	0
Learning Space	0	0
TopClass	0	0
iCampus	3	1
Boddington	4	2
Moodle	5	2
Blackboard	52	20
WebCT	89	34
Other	7	3
Don't know	21	8

**Table 5: VLE types installed**

Consistent with the academics surveyed, WebCT is unequivocally the leading current VLE product, with BlackBoard coming second by some distance. All the other VLE products were zero or statistically insignificant, with the exception of the two open source products Moodle and Boddington. One percent of respondents cited iCampus. The 3% of VLE products marked as 'Other' had all been developed in-house.

Moving to what respondents used VLEs for, a large number of abstentions or selections of the option 'Not applicable' were evident in the data gathered. Unlike academics, this expected scenario may be indicative of respondents' infrequent contact with students in traditional learning situations.

If you use a VLE, do you use it to...	Yes %	No %	N/R* %	N/A** %
deliver learning resources?	12	4	36	48
conduct assessments?	3	7	37	53
track the progress of learners?	3	6	38	53
communicate with learners?	7	7	37	49

**Table 6: Uses made of the VLE (N=262)**

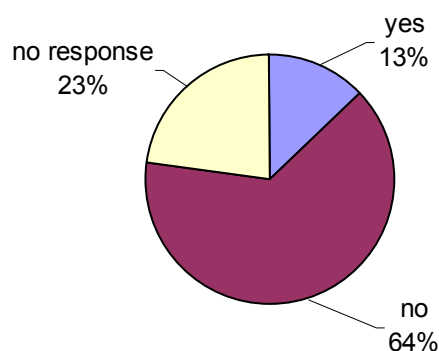
\* N/R no response

\*\* N/A not applicable

Seven other responses were received connected with VLE usage that did not fit into the above categories and these included;

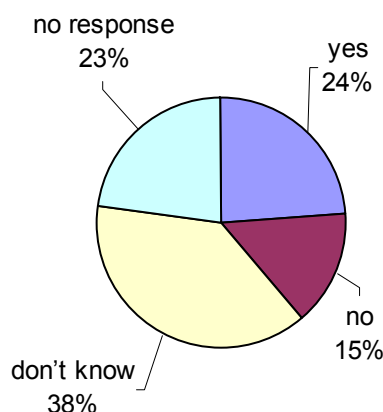
- delivering digitised book chapters and journals articles cleared through HERON
- participating in internal staff training
- administering WebCT
- training academics how to use the VLE

With respect to training in the use of the VLE, 13% claimed that they had been trained, with 64% that they had not. 23% of respondents failed to answer this question. This contrasts with academics, who were slightly less likely to know whether their institution had installed a VLE, but somewhat more likely to have received training in it (21%). On balance, in each case, it is clear that the level of VLE-related training is very low.



**Fig 9: Have you been trained to use the VLE? (N=262)**

Finally in an attempt to gauge some evidence of *Managed Learning Environments* within the sector, respondents were asked whether their library catalogue or departmental website were linked in any way to the VLE. Responses are shown in Fig 10.



**Fig 10: Is your library catalogue or departmental website linked to your VLE? (N=262)**

### **Question 13: Video Conferencing (VC)**

On balance, though this section of questions was asked of library and information services staff in the same way as academic staff, the former are clearly very light users of video conferencing. Only 39% of respondents knew whether they had access to their university's regular VC suite (Table 7) and only 12% of the entire staff cohort admitted to using it either sometimes (10%) or frequently (2%). This report has shown in a previous chapter that a tiny number of academic staff claim access to desktop VC (6%), but half of even that tiny percentage of library staff claim access to this particular technology (3%). Clearly, the majority of library-related respondents feel that VC is a technology with only limited relevance to them.

The large percentage of respondents who select 'not applicable' or who omit to describe any uses of VC (Table 10) is further evidence either of the lesser perceived relevance of the technology - or of a greater level of ignorance about it. Figs 7 to 10 demonstrate the digest of responses received to the VC section of the HETNA survey.

Do you have access to a video conferencing suite?	Yes%	No%	D/K% *	N/R%
	39	24	34	3

**Table 7: Access to a videoconference suite (N=262)**

If yes, how often do you use the VC suite?	Never%	Sometimes%	Frequently%	N/R%*
	35	10	2	54

**Table 8: Use made of the VC suite (N=262)**

Do you have access to desktop VC?	Yes%	No%	D/K%	N/R%*
	3	56	36	5

**Table 9: Access to desktop videoconferencing (N=?)**

	Yes%	No%	N/R%*	N/A%
Do you use VC to communicate with colleagues?	9	26	65	-
Do you use VC to communicate with students?	0	16	43	41

**Table 10: Use made of videoconferencing (N=?)**

\* D/K = don't know / N/A = not applicable / N/R = no response

A few open text suggestions for further use of VC was received and these were as follows:

- Currently developing VC to communicate with prospective students overseas - possibly use it as a part of learning.
- Have attended SCURL Disability Group meeting at Stirling University, where video conferencing was used to communicate with a librarian at the OU in Milton Keynes.
- Have mainly used it for joint meetings, and to interview staff who could not come to the University.
- Masterclasses
- To participate in meetings held at some distance from campus
- We retain tapes of the video-conferenced lectures for student use

### **Question 14: Using online learning technology**

A similar set of questions to that shown below was asked of academic and academic-related staff in another part of the HETNA survey. Here we see that library-related staff feel slightly more relaxed than academics that they have sufficient time to learn how to use online learning resources: 40%, compared to 34%. However, on the argument that it may be fundamental to the job remit of many library and information services staff to know about learning resources, whether paper-based or online, it may yet be troubling that a larger group of them (48%) claim that they *do not* have sufficient time. As may have been expected, at 70%, library-related staff scored highly in the area of knowing how to find resources. Only 56% of academics indicated awareness as to whether or not their institution had purchased a VLE. Perhaps librarians receive mixed messages from their employers about the value of identifying and promoting online resources as slightly less than half felt that they had institutional support to do so.

Do you.....	Yes %	No %	N/A % *	N/R %
...have sufficient time to learn how to use online learning resources?	40	48	10	3
...know how to find online learning resources that are relevant to your work?	70	19	8	2
...have access to facilities you need to use online learning technologies with students?	34	13	50	4
...have institutional support to identify and promote online resources?	49	16	30	5
...know how to make online learning more accessible?	24	35	32	8
...deliver online information skills?	35	29	34	3
...deliver research skills training?	23	34	40	3
...need training to help you use online learning resources with students?	35	0	0	65

**Table 11: The context of using online learning technology (N=262)**

\* D/K = don't know / N/A = not applicable / N/R = no response

As a supplementary part of Question 14, respondents were asked if there were any other factors which encouraged/discouraged their use of online learning technology. A total of 15 responses were received, of which 4 specifically related to lack of time. One of these noted that unless specifically timetabled, essential exploration of the types of online technology available was seen as "just playing around on the computer". A further 3 responses cited poor quality computing hardware, with one mentioning network instability. Two respondents required more training in the use of online learning technology before using it themselves, or helping others to use it, and one simply cited their personal experience which was that online sources did not work as well as printed matter, and especially books.

### **Question 15: Library websites**

In an attempt to explore how easily information is made available to students and staff on the sorts of subscription services available, respondents were asked whether their library had a website that listed all of the subscribed electronic resources. Over three quarters of responses received indicated that such an indexed resource existed, although when asked to cite the url for this resource, only 13 separate institutions were listed: Glasgow Caledonian, Glasgow, HeriotWatt (including Orkney campus), Napier, Paisley, QMUC, RGU, RSAMD, SAC, St Andrews, Stirling and Strathclyde. In one case, a non web-delivered index was cited as the indexing mechanism for these kinds of resources.

Does the library have a website that lists all of the electronic resources that your institution subscribes to?	Yes%	No%	N/A%	N/R%
	76	3	18	2

**Table 12: Existence of websites indexing subscription services (N=262)**

### **Question 16: Using online resources**

In Question 16 staff were asked if they used any of a list of given resources. For ease of comparison, the academic-related responses to this list are given in the table below:

	Lib %	Acad %
Census Data	14	12
Image Libraries	28	25
Data Sets	25	20

Map Data	18	14
Electronic Journals	73	80
Subject Gateways	59	30
Other	15	8

**Table 13: Online resources used by respondents**

There are obvious similarities in usage patterns of these resources across both staff cohorts here. Clearly, the most popularly consulted resources in both cases are electronic journals, with census data being used the least.

There were various other types of online resources in common usage, which did not straightforwardly fit into the categories supplied. When asked for further details, respondents cited most frequently bibliographic databases and catalogues, followed by use of electronic books. Also worth a mention in a couple of cases was the use of streaming media and video clips obtained from, for example, the 'Education Media Online service.

### ***Question 17: How online resources are used***

Question 17 probed more deeply into the ways in which online resources were used (Table 14, below). There are some patterns of similarity with the usage recorded by academics, but the most striking difference relates to using online materials developed by oneself or developed by others. Library-related staff frequently report using materials created by others (49% compared to only 20% of academics) but were less likely to have created those materials themselves: 10% of library-related staff, but 23% of academics. Perhaps this reflects a primary role on the part of academics to create a proportion of new teaching materials for use by their students, and a complementary role on the part of library-related staff to know where and how to find resources, whether these be books or electronic resources.

For librarian-related staff, supporting students by email is much more part of the working routine than for academics as almost three times the percentage of respondents (61% to 24%) claimed to use this method frequently. Only 8% of librarians claimed *never* to use this method of providing student support, against a much larger percentage (34%) of academics.

I have....	Never%	Sometimes%	Frequently%	WLTL%*
...used online materials created by others	8	38	49	2
...designed online materials myself	47	26	10	13
...used online assessments created by others	61	27	2	3
...designed online assessments myself	78	6	1	10
...supported students using email	34	34	24	4
...used online discussion forums	41	35	17	3
...used an electronic whiteboard for teaching	85	3	0	8
...taken part as a student in an online course	71	16	3	6
...used streaming audio or video	69	15	5	6

**Table 14: The uses made of materials, communications and support tools**

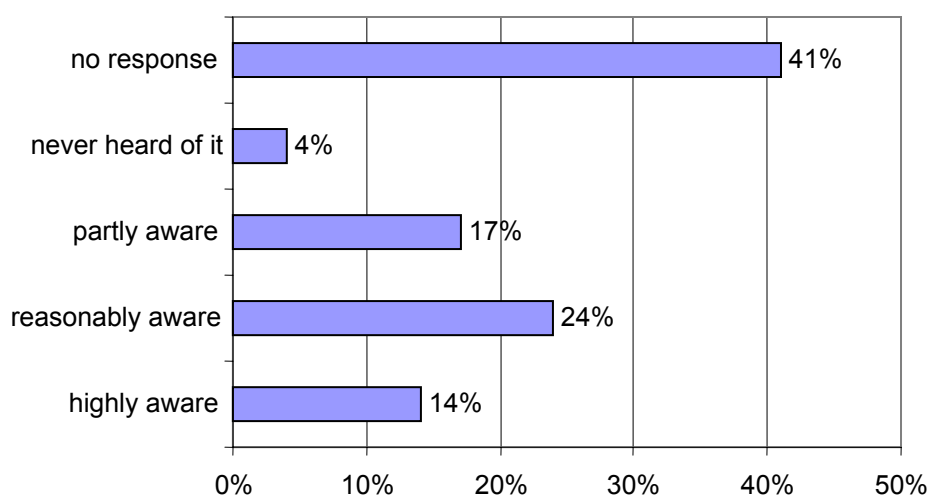
\* WLTL = would like to learn

In terms of identifying training need, the subjects identified most frequently by this cohort were: designing online materials and assessments themselves. This agrees with their recorded aspiration, evident through other questions in this survey, to gain training in webpage design.

Respondents were asked to identify other learning technology skills that they would be interested in developing. This open question yielded 29 responses, of which a further 8 related to web design or creating interactive online courses. 3 persons wanted more training in VLEs and an equal number wanted to know more about image processing and graphic design. One specifically mentioned a desire to learn about the pedagogical skills required to design good online learning materials and another wanted to create materials using metadata.

### **Question 18: Special needs**

Question 18 asked simply 'if you teach, are you aware of the accessibility issues that need to be considered when using online learning materials with learners?' Responses are summarised in the bar chart below. By far the largest category returned no answer at all to this question, but it would be unsafe to assume that this indicates ignorance on the part of this staff cohort about the issue. As the question began 'if you teach....' it is likely that respondents without a teaching load would indeed have concluded that this question did not apply to them. It would, therefore, require further enquiry on the part of individual institutions to ascertain the true level of any training need in this area.



**Fig 11: Awareness of SENDA (n=262)  
(Special Educational Needs and Disability Act, 2001)**

### Question 19: Assistive technologies

Though many staff in this cohort support students, but often not through direct teaching, it is nevertheless relevant to enquire into their awareness of specific assistive technologies. The results of this portion of the survey are displayed in Table 15, below. Some surprising comparisons may be made between librarian-related and academic staff here. In brief, the librarians group claim more knowledge about assistive technologies than academics, and yet their desire to learn even more is roughly the same. On average, 34% of all academics made no response to this section, compared to a 'no response' average among librarians which does not even attain double figures. It may be concluded that there is a relatively high level of awareness of these technologies among this staff group and a measurable training need for more information. The low level of question avoidance also indicates that this whole area is considered to be within the professional focus of this cohort.

I know about....	Yes%	No%	WLTL%*	N/R%
...making online learning resources more accessible?	36	24	33	7
...the 'accessibility options' built into the Microsoft Windows environment?	27	34	32	8
...adapted keyboards and alternatives to the standard mouse?	45	28	21	6
...alternative input methods (eg voice recognition, switches, infrared tools)	31	34	26	9
...alternative output methods (eg tactile diagrams, text-to-speech, Braille transcription)	28	37	27	8
...screen magnification & screen reading software (eg Zoomtext, Jaws, Supernova)	36	33	23	8
...specialist software to support learning (eg Texthelp, Mind Manager, Inspiration)	24	44	24	8

**Table 15: Levels of familiarity with assistive technologies (N=262)**

\* WLTL = would like to learn / N/R = no response

Respondents were asked if they knew about any other assistive technologies. Further suggestions were obtained in connection with Repetitive Strain Injury (RSI) and screen-

reading software for blind and visually impaired users and for students with dyslexia or dyslexia-related problems.

Finally on assistive technologies, respondents were asked if any online learning materials they developed were reviewed to check that they are accessible. The answers obtained are represented in Table 16, below. The very large 'no response' rate is likely to be indicative of the fact that this cohort rarely develop their own online learning materials (as indicated in Question 17) rather than that they do not check these materials for accessibility.

Do you review on-line materials for accessibility?	Always %	Usually %	Sometimes %	Never %	N/R %
	2.7	5.3	4.6	6.1	81.3

**Table 16: the frequency with which online materials developed by respondents are reviewed for accessibility purposes (N=262)**

## Section D: Staff Development and Support Needs

### Question 20. IT qualifications

This final section of the HETNA questionnaire for library-related staff looks in more detail at the training needs of the individual respondents.

Do you have an IT qualification	Yes %	No %	N/R %
	16	42	41

**Table 17: Library staff and IT qualifications (N=262)**

16% of all respondents claimed to have an IT qualification, as indicated in Table 17. When asked to provide further details of this, 46 persons gave a range of answers, with 70% of these identifying ECDL at some level. The remainder cited various internal university staff development courses, an HNC, a PG Dip and an O level in computing studies.

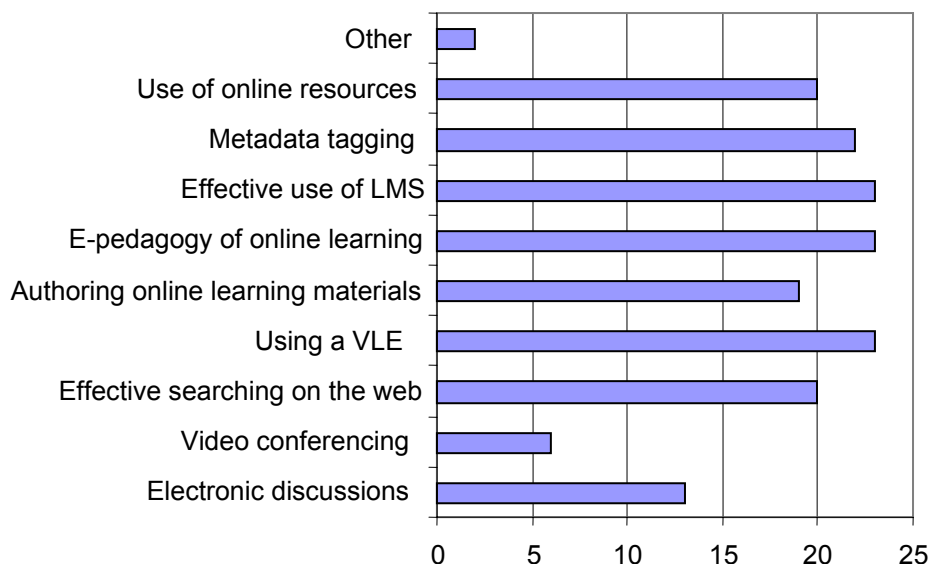
### Question 21. The kind of training that would benefit respondents' work

Question 21 attempted to group together the types of training calculated by the survey designers to be most useful to this staff cohort. Respondents were simply asked to check the ones that they believed would most benefit their work. As many boxes could be ticked as the respondent felt necessary. A further box was provided in which respondents could make their suggestions if none of the offered training types were felt to be suitable.

Training in which of the following would most benefit your work?	Percentage
Facilitating electronic discussions	13
Video conferencing	6
Effective searching on the web	20
Using a VLE	23
Authoring online learning materials	19
Understanding the theory, practice and pedagogy of online learning	23
Effective use of library management systems	23
Metadata tagging	22
Use of online resources	20
Other	2

**Table 18: What sort of training would most benefit your work?**

As portrayed graphically in Fig 19, seven of the ten suggestions were selected by 20%, or close to 20%, of all respondents. Least valued by respondents was the possibility of training in video conferencing, which agrees with the interpretation about VC offered in this analysis at Question 13, above.



**Fig 19: What sort of training would most benefit your work? (percentages)**

The 'Other' category of staff training yielded one response that training would be welcomed in the area of a single named commercial library management system, and two responses generally that training in financial management was required.

In an attempt to rank more accurately the types of training felt to be suitable, a final sub question asked respondents to indicate out of all the training selected which was the most important to them.

Of all the items selected above, respondents were asked to indicate which of these was the most important to them.

What sort of training is most important to you?	Percentage
Authoring online learning materials	17
Effective searching on the web	9
Effective use of library management systems	17
Facilitating electronic discussions	1
Metadata tagging	16
Understanding the theory, practice and pedagogy of online learning	14
Use of online resources	10
Using a VLE	13
Other	3

**Table 20: Training needs identified**

Asking people to specifically name the most appropriate training in their case has the interesting effect of elevating 'authoring online learning materials' from seventh position to joint top. Also most popular was the need to know more about the effective use of library management systems. Perhaps as further confirmation of the low value placed on the need for VC training, not a single person selected this type of training as important to them.

## Question 22. Specialist ICT Skills

Having enquired into professional, IT and general learning technology training needs, the survey proceeded at Question 22 to enquire into respondents' needs for specialist skills. Strong preferences were shown for web development (agreeing with previous preferences) at 31% and project management at 25%. Respondents were requested to tick all that applied.

Would training in any of the following specialist skills be of benefit to you?	Yes %
Image Editing	11
Video Creation/editing	7
Web Development	31
Project Management	25
Other	1

**Table 21: Specialist ICT skills required**

As with Question 21, respondents were then asked to grade their selections in terms of the specialist training most important to them.

Training in which specialist skills is most important to you?	Percentage
Image Editing	6
Video Creation/editing	2
Web Development	50
Project Management	34
Other	8

**Table 22: Prioritising training in specialist ICT skills**

In case further corroboration were needed, web development is the firm favourite at 50%, with project management showing a popular return at 34% of responses received. Only two other responses to 'other' were received and these related to *Oracle* and resource management.

## Question 23. Most suitable methods of training and support

Respondents were asked to indicate the suitability of various suggested methods of training and support. The methods proposed are as outlined in Table 23. As with other cohorts within the HETNA survey, librarians also strongly favoured traditional courses and blended courses of flexible online and face to face methods.

Which methods of training and support would you find suitable?	Percentage
Traditional face-to-face workshops/courses	81
Phone advice by phone, electronic mail or through electronic discussion lists	42
Blended a 'blended' model of face-to-face workshops and open or flexible learning supported online	73
Open and flexible learning delivered and supported wholly online	48

**Table 23: Methods of training found suitable**

## Question 24: Factors which influenced/restricted respondents' preferences with respect to most suitable methods of receiving training

88 responses were received to this question about training preferences. Though a range of views were expressed, some common themes were evident. Almost 1 in 3 respondents named once again the specific barrier of time. As this was an open text question, many went on to explain further how lack of time influenced their training preferences. Several cited their

situation within small teams, and described an inability to get away for training where every team member was crucial to overall operations. The ultimate flexibility of some degree of online learning was identified by a quarter of respondents – some saw it as a way to get round the problem of not being able easily to get away for face to face scheduled training. Others, while describing the same barriers of time and everyday work pressures, preferred face to face training situations, realising, practically perhaps, that if time were not blocked out for such purposes self-directed training would just never happen. A couple of typical comments were as follows:

“I prefer flexible learning but a traditional workshop means I would have dedicated learning time which could not be interrupted.”

“Training works best when you can get completely away from the work environment to focus.”

Further reasons for almost a fifth of respondents preferring wholly face to face traditional training situations were connected with the motivational aspects of speaking with a real person (rather than a computer) and with the ability to ask direct questions. If flexible learning meant learning outside normal office hours, a couple of people cited barriers connected with being able to provide childcare and with the computer equipment available to them, which was felt to be inferior to the task. Many people made comments connected with the quality of the training on offer, whatever the medium. As one respondent succinctly put it: “The method of delivery is less important than its content and effectiveness”.

### **Question 25: Any other training needs**

In case there remained any views still not gathered in the previous open text questions, respondents were given a final opportunity to articulate their training needs in connection with ICT and the use of e-learning. Only 7 percent of respondents chose to supply final suggestions. Within these 18 responses, no particular pattern was evident. Web design was mentioned only once, as was advanced ECDL. A couple of people wished for training in the pedagogy of online learning and two more asked for training in developing databases. One of the latter, after requesting assistance with database development, asked “but how expert do we need to be? I would like more technical support so we can all work to our strengths rather than be a jack of all trades”. Finally, the use of assistive technology has already been identified as an area particularly relevant to this cohort, and one additional person here requested training in the use of assistive technology for distance learners.

### **Conclusions**

1. General: there were four times as many female as male respondents to the library-related survey. Age ranges were fairly equally distributed between persons in their 30s, 40s and 50s. The most frequently claimed job title was ‘library assistant’.
2. No problems noted with respect to access to hardware and facilities, and the quality of equipment available. Also very high confidence levels in terms of using computers for work. Evidence to show that the use of computers has pervaded most facets of the working lives of this cohort.
3. A very large percentage use computers to communicate with students (72%), although the largest recorded usages made were with respect to finding information and communicating with colleagues: 97% of respondents claimed that they used computers for this purpose.

4. As with other staff cohorts within the HETNA survey, the most frequently identified training need was for creating web pages, followed by databases at 42% and 34% respectively. The specific skills that respondents were already confident with were: using email, finding things on the web and creating documents in Microsoft Office.
5. A similar percentage of library-related respondents have access to a computer at home (80+ percent) though a much smaller proportion than academics acknowledged using these for work purposes (only 40%, compared to 84%).
6. Dial-up connections at home are still about twice as prevalent as broadband connections, perhaps reflecting availability rather than preference.
7. Slightly more librarians (58%) than academics (50%) knew whether their institution had installed a VLE, though a smaller proportion claimed to have had any training in it (13% compared with 21% of academics).
8. The most frequently cited VLE products were *WebCT* and *BlackBoard*. At 2% of responses each, a small number of open source products were mentioned, such as *Moodle* and *Boddington*. 3% of respondents cited 'home-grown' VLE products in use within their institution.
9. Video conferencing is not frequently used by this cohort.
10. As with all other staff cohorts, lack of time was cited as the most significant barrier to respondents' taking up further training opportunities or making more use of online learning technologies. Many persons saw themselves as indispensable within small teams and getting time away for training sometimes jeopardised the overall service they were providing and put impossible strain on their colleagues.
11. Of all the online resources that were identified, online journals were by far the most popular type of resource used. Around three quarters of both academic and library-related staff used such resources from time to time.
12. There was a comparatively high awareness of disability issues by this cohort. Clearly, they saw the issue as one linked with their own professional area. Not only was there more awareness (than academics) generally, librarians also expressed a desire receive more training or information on accessibility.
13. 26% of librarians designed online materials themselves sometimes; 10% did so frequently. And yet, of those 36% that developed online materials in some way, only a very small proportion claimed that they reviewed the materials to check that they were accessible. Only 2.7% did so 'always', 5.3% 'usually' and 4.6% 'sometimes'. Where librarians also claimed that they would like to learn more about accessibility, it is likely that targeted staff development in this area would be well received and successful.
14. The most suitable methods of training for librarians were identified as face to face or blended. Wholly online support was not very popular due to the value that some respondents put on the 'personal touch' or interacting with a human expert, but most people were happy to accept some online elements to their training.