Web-scale discovery in the Arts: Royal Holloway's First Year Undergraduates and Academics feed back

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Research timeline

August 2013:
Literature review of WebOPAC/Discovery system comparisons

September 2013:
Online survey first year undergraduates' in English, Drama & Theatre, Media Arts

January 2014:
Interviews with academic staff in English, Drama & Theatre, Media Arts

March 2014:
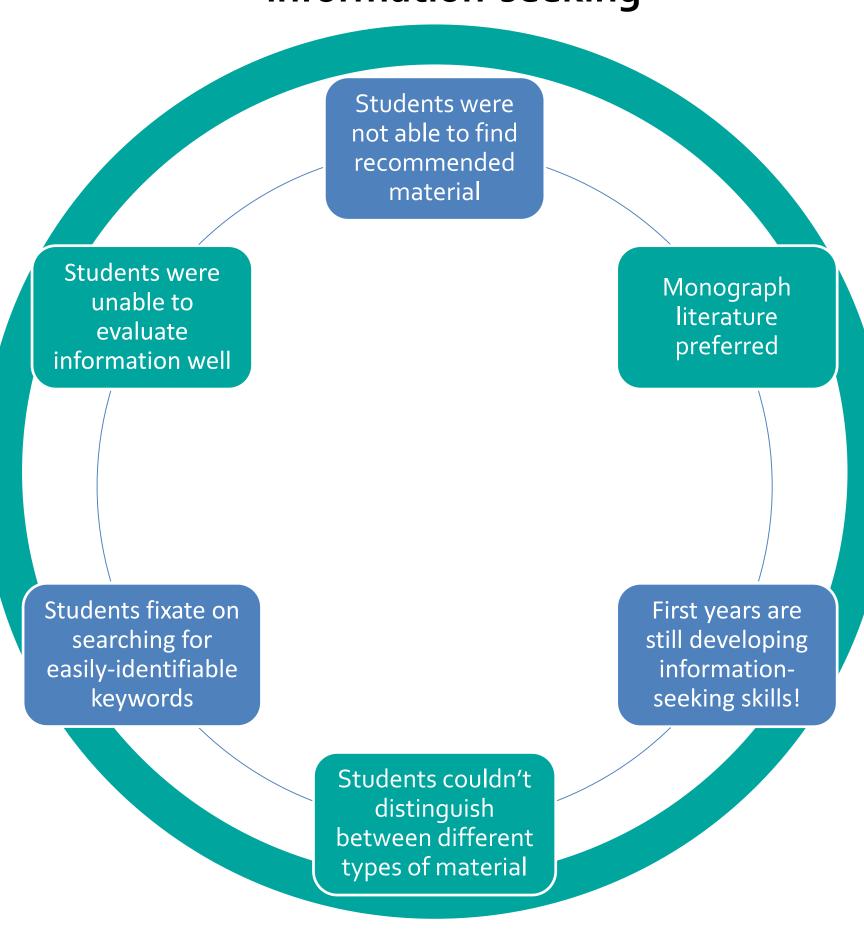Create a list of desired features from a Library catalogue

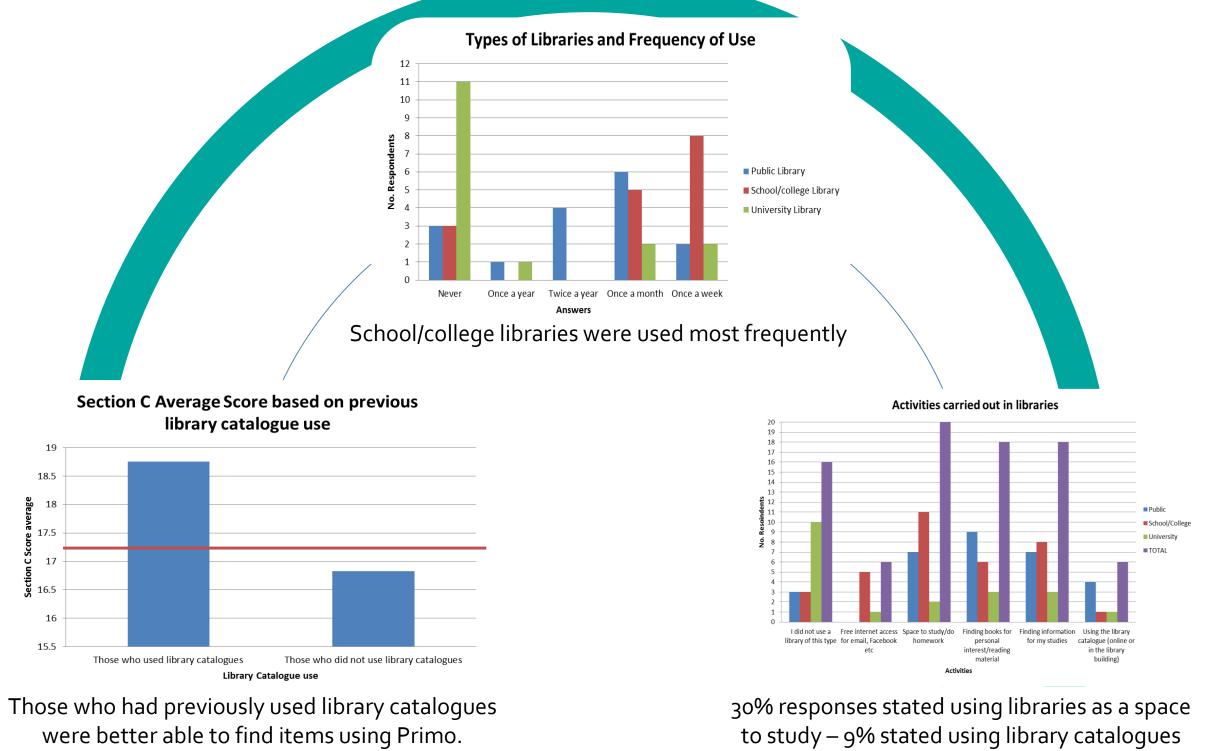**April 2014:**
Assess the merits of Primo against catalogue

April 2014:
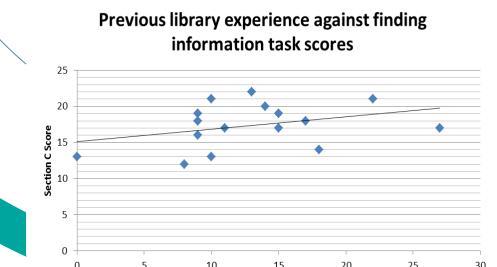Suggest improvements, and recommend most relevant search engine for these students
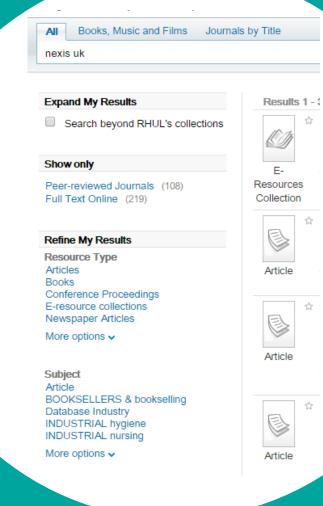
Academics' experience of students information-seeking

- Students were not able to find recommended material
- Monograph literature preferred
- First years are still developing information-seeking skills!
- Students couldn't distinguish between different types of material
- Students fixate on searching for easily-identifiable keywords
- Students were unable to evaluate information well

Students' information-seeking before university

Types of Libraries and Frequency of Use

School/college libraries were used most frequently

Section C Average Score based on previous library catalogue use

Those who had previously used library catalogues were better able to find items using Primo.

Activities carried out in libraries

30% responses stated using libraries as a space to study – 9% stated using library catalogues

Previous library experience against finding information task scores

Overall, there was a very slight correlation between previous use of library catalogues and ability to find information using Primo.

Desired features of web-scale discovery

- Clear display of different materials
- Post-search limits (that are easy to find and use!)
- Search suggestions, Did you mean…?, search hints
- Browse by subject
- Giving priority to items recommended on reading lists
- Item recommendations
- Simple search interface

What has changed?

- More training on 'Books' search, search filters
- Library and departments need to collaborate
- Better data collection methods needed
- What about other subject disciplines?

Recommendations

Question	Answer
What is the recommended system?	• Primo scores higher than WebOPAC on all 7 key factors
What are the main benefits of Primo?	• Search suggestions e.g. Did you mean? • Labelling a range of available materials
What are the main concerns with Primo?	• Index results rank higher than monographs • Users default to 'All' not 'Books' search
How can we inform users?	• Training and demonstrations are essential • Make 'Books' the default search?
Anything else?	• Undergraduates need help evaluating information as well as retrieving it!