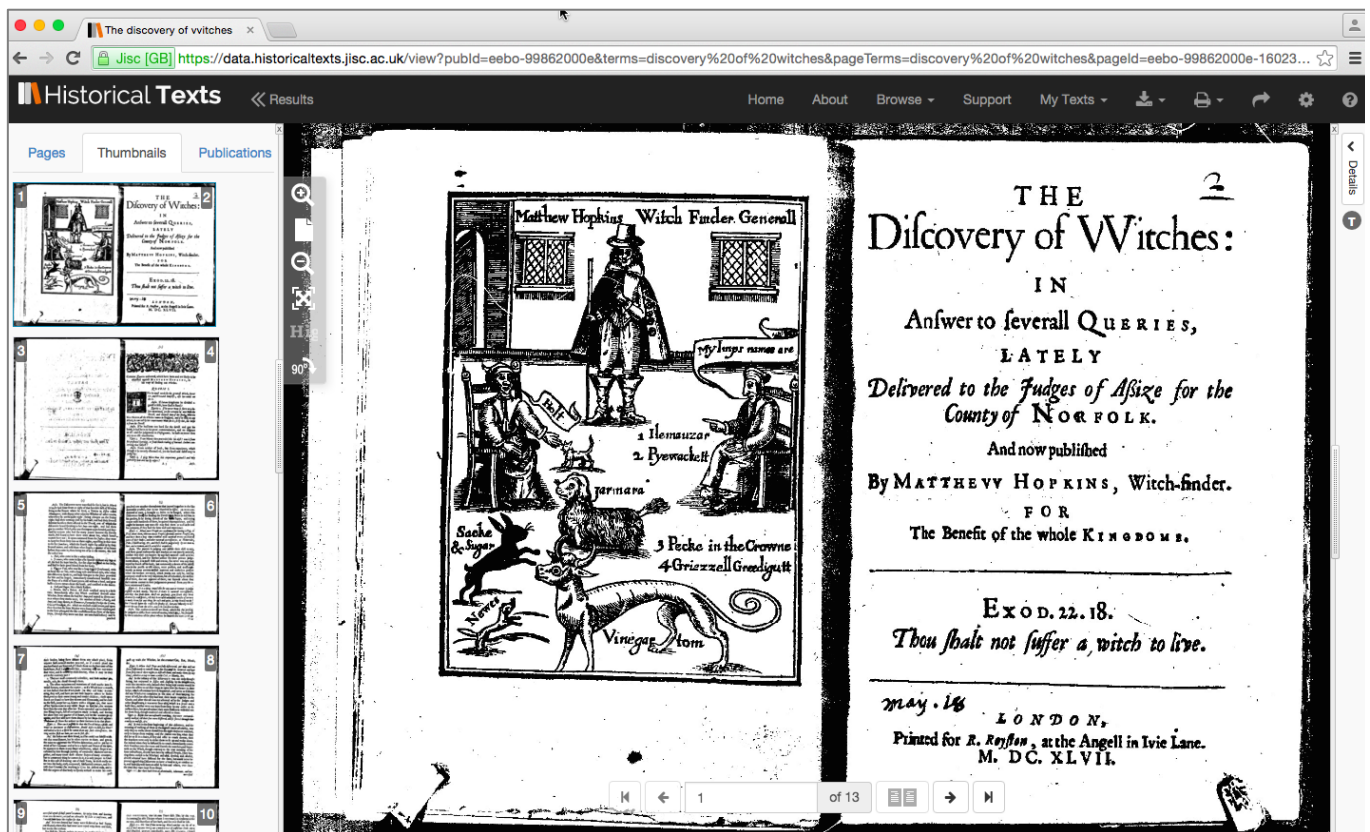


Historical Texts user satisfaction survey

2014-15



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Summary

The Historical Texts user satisfaction survey ran from 13 January to 31 March 2015. A pop-up prompt appeared after logging into the platform and 137 responses were received from the community. This is a report on the results of the survey.

The new Historical Texts platform was released on 23 June 2014, replacing the previous Jisc Historic Books platform. Historical Texts uses different search software to Jisc Historic Books and includes a new custom-designed interface. Where comparisons are made with previous surveys, respondents were referring to the Jisc Historic Books platform.

We were pleased to find that 77% of respondents selected the top three highest recommendation ratings of 8, 9 and 10, indicating that they would recommend Historical Texts to a colleague. 76% of respondents advised their overall experience of the service over the last 12 months was good and 85% agreed that their work would take longer if Historical Texts was not available.

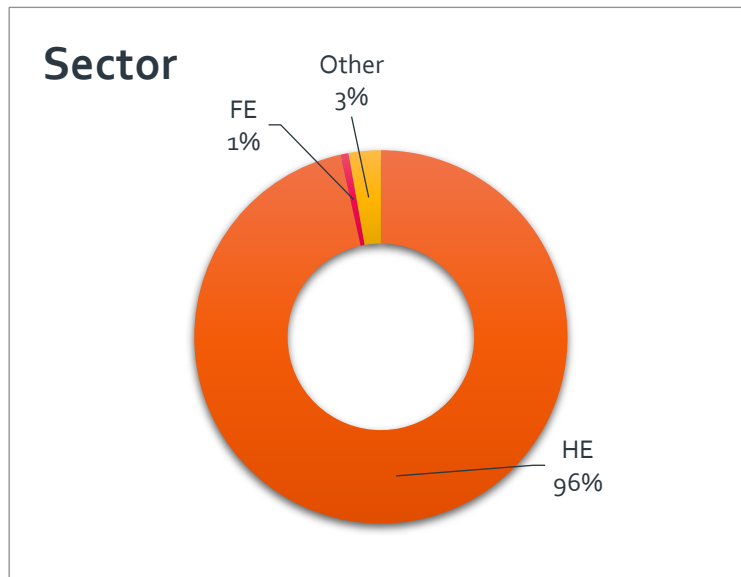
We asked respondents to rate various aspects of the website this year and found that 91% rated the quality of the content as good, 76% rated the readability of the text on the support pages as good and 75% rated the visual design as good. There were slightly more mixed results for ease of use (62% rated it as good but 19% rated it as poor), site search (57% rated it as good but 21% rated it as poor) and navigation (49% rated it as good but 22% rated it as poor), which we'll look into further.

We asked what people liked about the service and many respondents commented on the breadth of material available as well as the ability to view texts online without needing to travel to holding archives.

We also asked how the service could be improved. A range of suggestions were made including displaying additional bibliographic fields, the ability to download the full text for the images, more content and improved search and display of periodicals and multi-volume books.

In terms of the next steps, many of the points raised are either requests for features that are already in development or are included as part of the planned future developments for the service. This includes improved periodicals search and browse functionality, download of EEBO full text transcriptions, display of additional bibliographic information and addition of new collections. So the findings from this survey helps to confirm we're heading in the right direction to continue to meet the needs of the community.

Q1: To which institution do you belong?



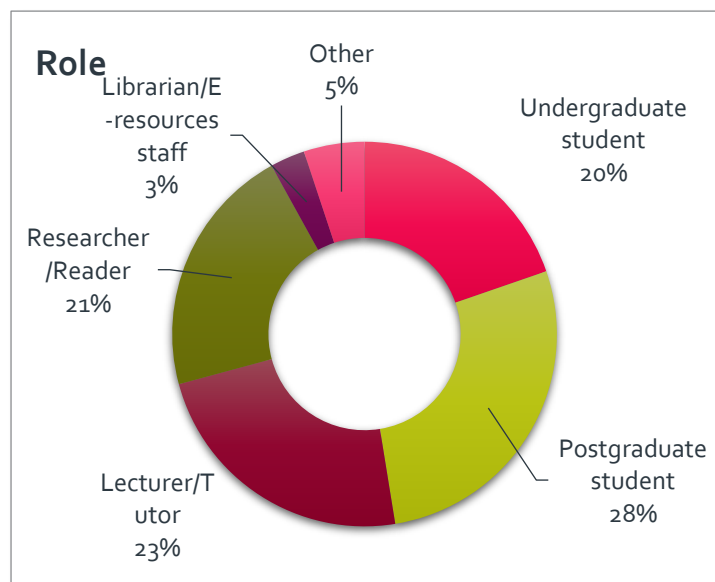
This year we asked which institution respondents belonged to rather than just which sector.

For the purposes of this summary report we have grouped responses by sector though based on the Jisc Collections banding classifications for Higher Education (HE) and Further Education (FE).

As with the previous years, most respondents indicated they were in the HE sector (96%).

Category	No. of responses		
	2014-15	2013-14	2012-13
Higher Education (HE)	139 (96%)	77 (92%)	134 (83%)
Further Education (FE)	1 (1%)	2 (2%)	8 (5%)
Other Education (e.g. Sixth Form College)	N/A	0 (0%)	3 (2%)
Research Council	N/A	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Other	4 (3%)	5 (6%)	17 (10%)
Total	137	84 (100%)	162 (100%)

Q2: In which role are you using Historical Texts?



Almost half of the respondents indicated they were students (28% postgraduate and 20% undergraduate), followed by lecturer / tutor (23%) and Researcher / reader (21%). Of the few who selected the 'other' category (5%) several advised they were retired academic staff.

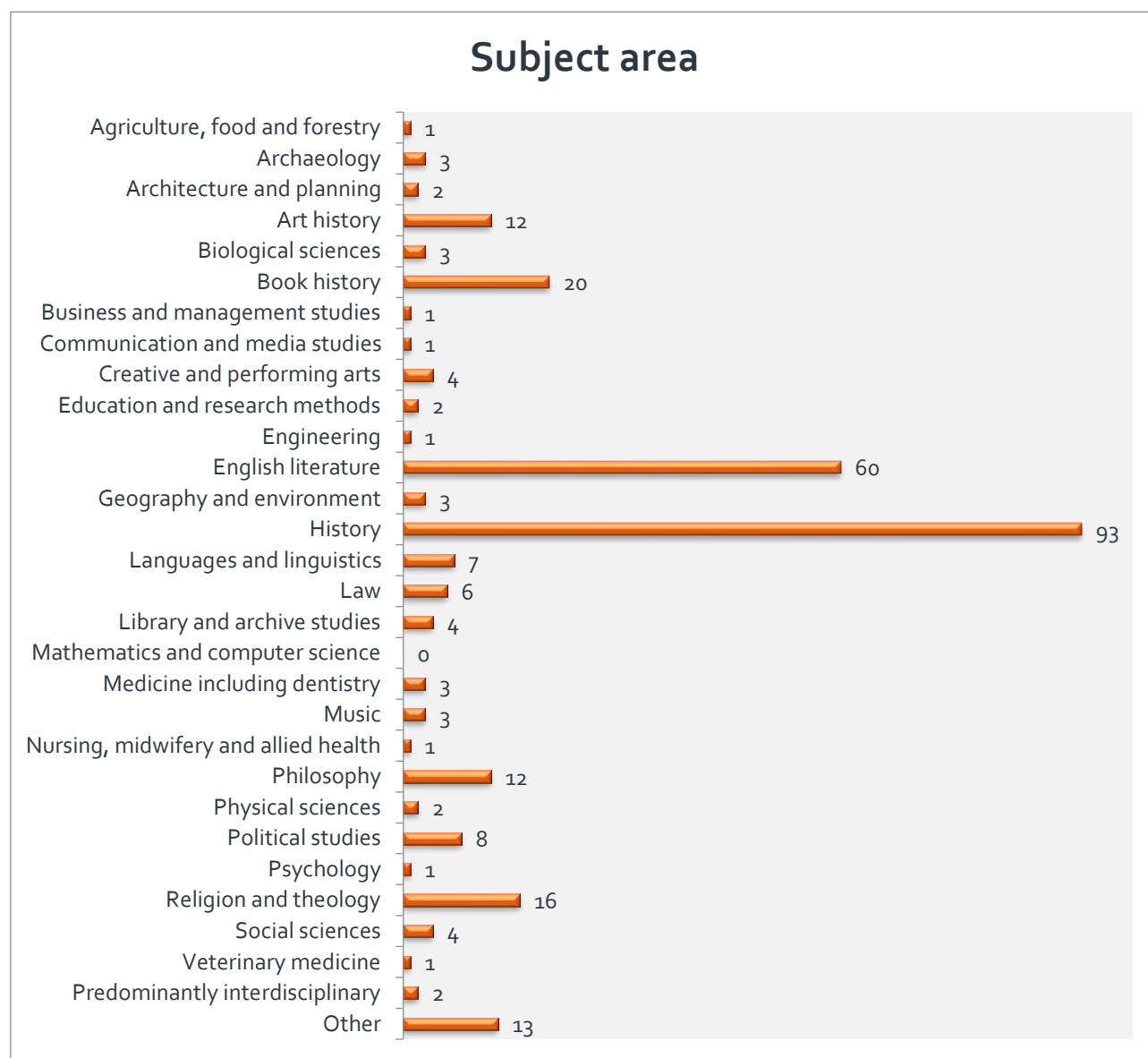
This pattern is very similar to previous surveys where around half of the respondents advised they were undergraduate or postgraduate students.

Category	No of responses		
	2014-15	2013-14	2012-13
Undergraduate student	27 (20%)	19 (23%)	27 (17%)
Postgraduate student	38 (28%)	25 (30%)	43 (26%)
Other student	0 (0%)	1 (1%)	2 (1%)
Lecturer/Tutor	32 (23%)	17 (20%)	22 (14%)
Researcher/Reader	29 (21%)	15 (18%)	50 (31%)
Librarian/E-resources staff	4 (3%)	5 (6%)	13 (8%)
Other	7 (5%)	2 (2%)	5 (3%)
Total	137 (100%)	84 (100%)	162 (100%)

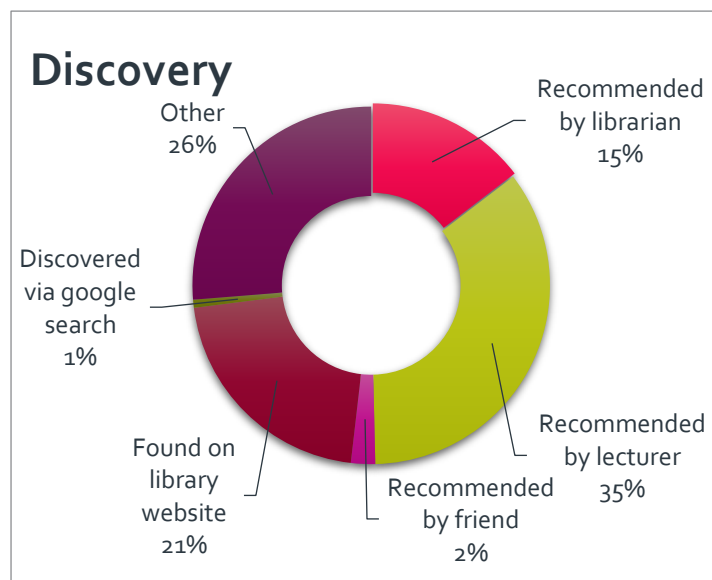
Q3: Please indicate your subject area

Respondents could select as many subject areas as appropriate and there were a total of 289 selections from 137 respondents. The majority indicated their subject area was History (93) or English Literature (60) with a smaller number from a wide range of subject areas including Book History (20), Religion and Theology (16), Philosophy (12) and Art History (12).

This is consistent with findings from previous surveys. In 2013-14 there were 172 selections from 84 respondents. 55 indicated their subject area was History and 36 selected English Literature, with smaller numbers from a wide range too.



Q4: How did you discover Historical Texts?



The most common way respondents discovered Historical Texts was through a recommendation from their lecturer (35%).

The next highest discovery method was the 'other' category (26%) and many who selected this option advised they had been long time users of EEBO or ECCO, and simply transferred to using Historical Texts when their institution changed their subscription.

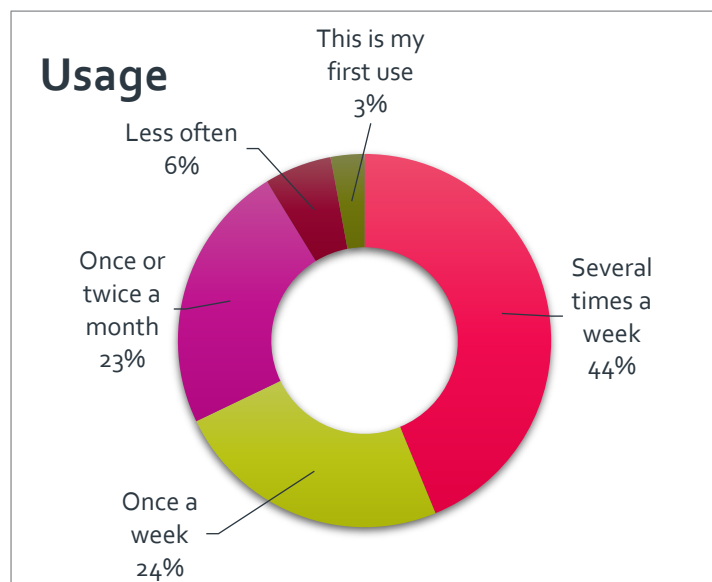
The library is also key method of discovery with 21% of respondents indicating they discovered it on their library website and 15% had Historical

Texts recommended to them by a librarian.

This pattern is consistent with the discovery methods in previous surveys.

Category	No of responses		
	2014-15	2013-14	2012-13
Recommended by librarian	20 (15%)	15 (18%)	22 (13%)
Recommended by lecturer	48 (35%)	28 (33%)	45 (28%)
Recommended by friend	3 (2%)	6 (7%)	8 (5%)
Found on library website	29 (21%)	17 (20%)	53 (33%)
Discovered via google search	1 (1%)	0 (0%)	1 (1%)
Other	36 (26%)	18 (21%)	33 (20%)
Total	137 (100%)	84 (99%)	162 (100%)

Q5: On average, how often do you use this service?



68% of the respondents said they were regular users of the platform, advising they use Historical Texts either several times a week (44%) or once a week (24%) with a further 23% indicated they use it once or twice a month.

Of the 93 respondents who use it once or more times a week, the largest groups are a fairly even split between postgraduate students (25), researcher / readers (23), Lecturer / Tutors (23) with a slightly smaller number of undergraduate students (16).

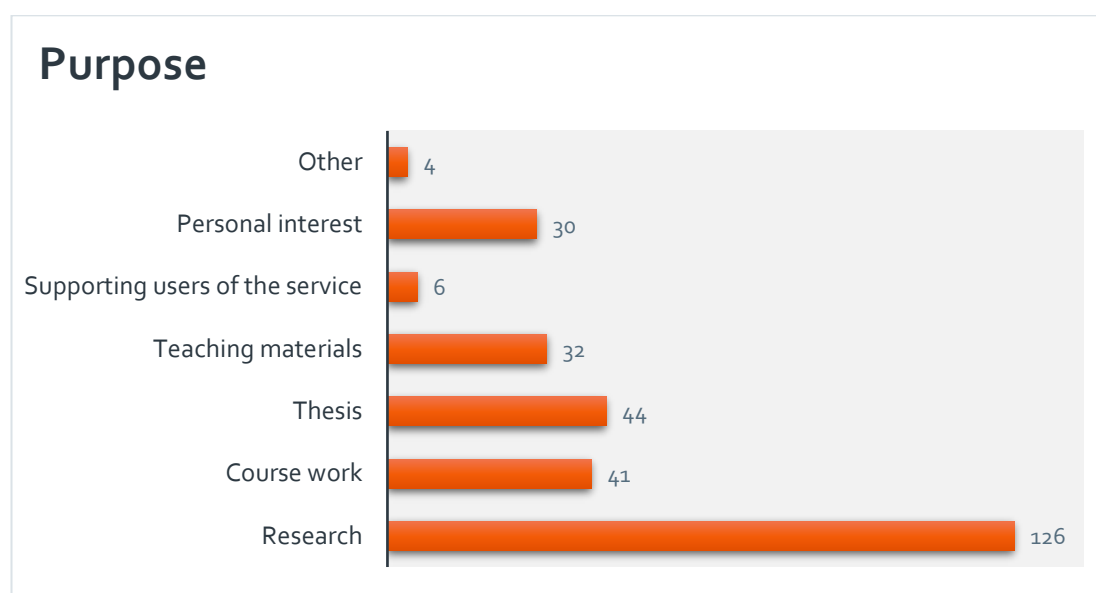
This is consistent with previous surveys. In the 2013-14 survey 63% of respondents advised they used it several times or once a week, with a further 29% using it once or twice a month.

Category	No of responses		
	2014-15	2013-14	2012-13
Several times a week	60 (44%)	28 (33%)	64 (40%)
Once a week	33 (24%)	25 (30%)	23 (14%)
Once or twice a month	32 (23%)	24 (29%)	44 (27%)
Less often	8 (6%)	5 (6%)	14 (9%)
This is my first use	4 (3%)	2 (2%)	17 (10%)
Total	137 (100%)	84 (100%)	162 (100%)

Q6: For what purpose do you use Historical Texts?

More than one purpose could be selected for this question and a total of 283 options were selected by 137 respondents. Most respondents use Historical Texts for research (126 selections) followed by thesis (44) and course work (41).

This is consistent with previous surveys where research receives the highest number of selections.



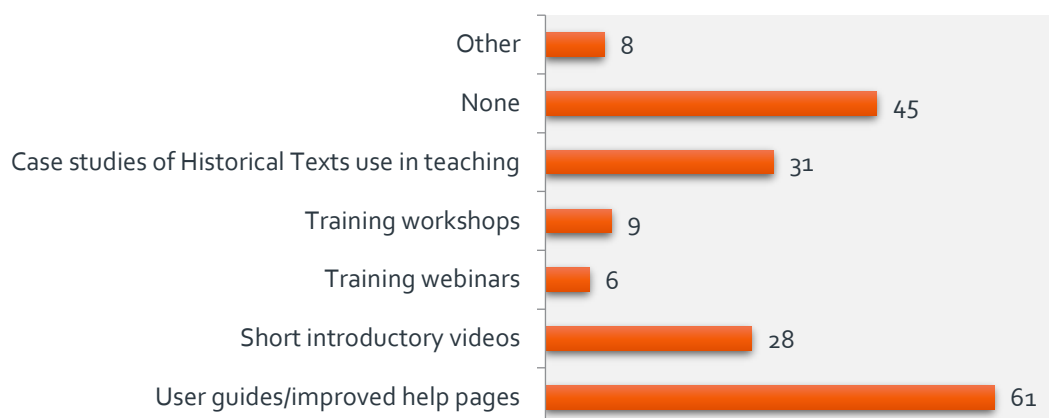
Category	No of responses		
	2014-15	2013-14	2012-13
Other	4	1	10
Personal interest	30	15	30
Supporting users of the service	6	8	N/A
Teaching materials	32	16	43
Thesis	44	20	36
Coursework	41	30	39
Research	126	67	137
Total	283	156	295

Q7: What support and training would you like for Historical Texts?

More than one option could be selected for this question and 188 responses were received. Most respondents requested user guides / improved help pages (61 selections) but the next highest option was for none (45). This was followed by requests for case studies of Historical Texts use in teaching (31) and short introductory videos (28).

These requests are similar to the requests in previous surveys for the Jisc Historic Books platform too, although in previous years there were several comments in the other category requesting that the interface was made more user-friendly.

Support and training



Category	No of responses		
	2014-15	2013-14	2012-13
Other	8	13	52
None	45	31	N/A
Case studies	31	13	19
Training workshops	9	4	8
Training webinars	6	1	12
Short introductory videos	28	15	30
User guides/improved help pages	61	33	86

Total	188	110	207
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Q8. Please indicate how you rate the following aspects of the website:

We were very pleased to see the quality of content in Historical Texts was rated as very good or good by 91% of respondents, the visual design was rated as very good or good by 75% of respondents and the readability of text on the support pages was rated as very good or good by 76% of respondents.

Ease of use received slightly more mixed results with 62% of respondents rating it as very good or good but 19% rating it as poor or very poor. While over half of the respondents rated the site search as very good or good (57%), 21% rated it as poor or very poor and 49% of respondents rated navigation as very good or good but 22% rated it as poor or very poor. We are aware that searching and browsing for EEBO periodicals in particular is difficult, which we are currently working to enhance along with improved handling of bibliographic numbers (ESTC numbers with leading zeros and trailing periods in STC numbers).

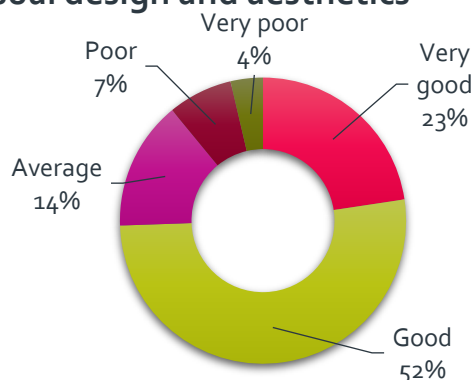
	Very good	Good	Average	Poor	Very Poor	Don't know	Total
a. Visual design and aesthetics	31 (23%)	71 (52%)	20 (14%)	10 (7%)	5 (4%)	0 (0%)	137
b. Navigation (access to content)	10 (7%)	57 (42%)	39 (28%)	15 (11%)	15 (11%)	1 (1%)	137
c. Quality of content	70 (51%)	55 (40%)	8 (6%)	3 (2%)	0 (0%)	1 (1%)	137
d. Readability of text on the site (this refers to the text on the support pages not the full text for the publications in the viewer)	38 (28%)	66 (48%)	19 (14%)	5 (4%)	3 (2%)	6 (4%)	137
e. Effectiveness of site search	20 (15%)	57 (42%)	28 (20%)	8 (6%)	21 (15%)	3 (2%)	137
f. Overall ease of use	19	66	25	13	13	1	137

In previous surveys this multi-part question wasn't included, however, we did ask "How do you find using Jisc Historic Books?" and the results are in the table below.

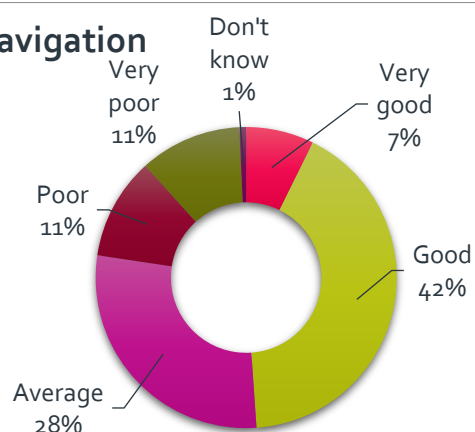
Category	No of responses	
	2013-14	2012-13
Very easy	7 (8%)	12 (8%)
Easy	27 (32%)	50 (31%)
Neither easy nor difficult	20 (24%)	44 (27%)

Difficult	20 (24%)	36 (22%)
Very difficult	10 (12%)	20 (12%)
Total	84 (100%)	162 (100%)

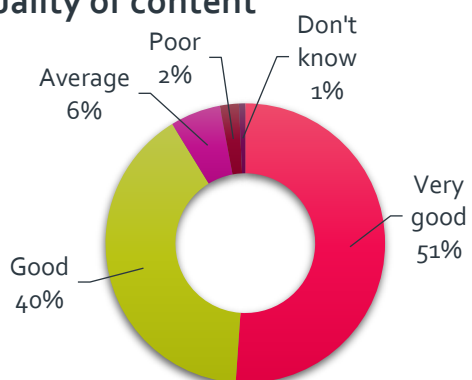
Visual design and aesthetics



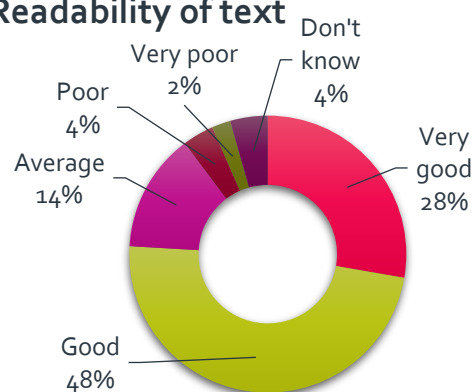
Navigation



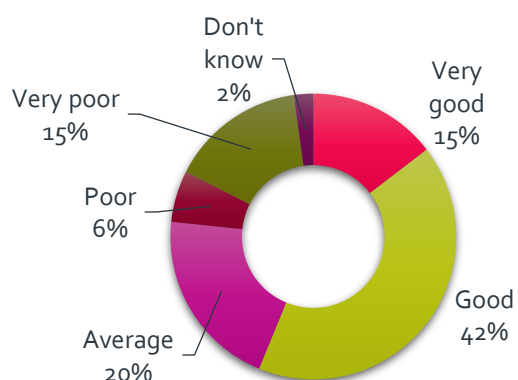
Quality of content



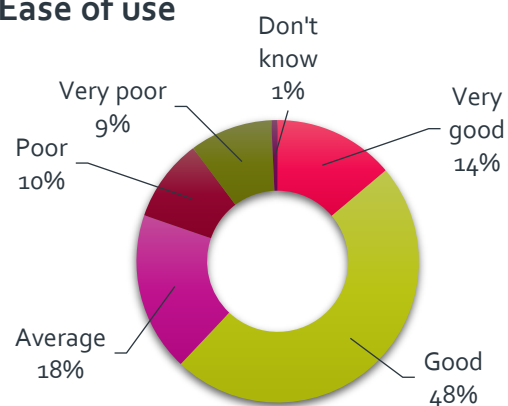
Readability of text



Effectiveness of site search



Ease of use



Q9: What do you like about Historical Texts?

We received 73 responses to this optional free text question. Many respondents commented on the breadth of material available as well as the ability to view texts online without needing to travel to holding archives.

A selection of the comments can be found below.

HE, postgraduate student:

I find it to be an excellent resource for obscure and non-canonical texts that are not in print or easily available.

HE, lecturer/tutor:

Historical Texts makes my research quicker and more effective.

HE, Researcher/reader:

Access to such a wide range of material has made a fantastic difference to my research - I can discover work and follow texts very easily.

Other, Librarian/resources staff:

The viewer has everything I need without being cluttered, and the search can be as broad or as specific as I like.

HE, Researcher/reader:

Having what used to be variety of separate databases searchable in a single location. Also the PDF download option which is a tremendous improvement on EEBO and ECCO.

HE, undergraduate student:

It's a treasure chest! I don't know where I'd be without it.

HE, lecturer/tutor:

It looks better and is more flexible than the old EEBO site. Much easier to read and browse the texts.

HE, lecturer/tutor:

Its searchability enables reserchers to make new connections-for example I was able to ifentify a range of women printers in the 18th century by looking at publishers and to establish the various publications that certain individuals wrote which were not widely known about.

HE, researcher/reader:

The huge range of available materials and the multiple reading formats that are possible for many of the texts. The convenience of accessing many of these documents without having to make a trip to the original versions is incredibly useful.

HE, lecturer/tutor:

The ability to search for variant spellings; its general format and usability.

Q10: How can Historical Texts be improved?

We received 75 responses to this optional free text question. There were a range of suggestions including display of additional metadata fields, ability to download full text versions of the images, more content, links to resource discovery providers and search and display of periodicals and multi-volume books. Many of these are features that we are either already working on or plan to develop over the next year.

A selection of comments can be found below.

Other (BL), librarian/eresources staff:

Little thing: in the Thomason tracts 'browse by volume' function - please put the items within each volume in numerical order. Big thing: An image match search would be a dream come true.

HE, researcher/reader:

It would be good to download the plain text of the texts - eg either the OCR'd material or, where available, the TCP material, especially now EEBO-TCP phase 1 is openly accessible.

HE, researcher/reader:

Better full-text searching, including ability to see snippets of results in listings.

HE, Librarian/special collections staff:

1. Facilitate searching by ESTC number. This has improved considerably over the last year or two, but the leading zeroes in ESTC numbers are still a problem. 2. The display of search results could be improved by grouping together multi-volume sets under a single record, and by supplying additional information in the list result view to help distinguish between similar editions of the same work. 3. Make links to Historical Texts available in ESTC.

HE, lecturer/tutor:

access to periodicals by date or issue number. The Chadwick Healey interface worked well for this; HT doesn't work at all.

HE, lecturer/tutor:

All records should indicate the holding library for a given text. This is VITAL information that is provided using Eighteenth Century Collections Online but not here.

HE, lecturer/tutor:

Clear images of the texts, instead of the current ones which are often extremely blurred; separation of EEBO from ECCO and other elements; not having to login for a second time after being directed to the site from my institution's library website.

HE, Fellow:

Give access to data so it can be used with textual analysis software.

HE, Researcher/reader:

Increasing the breadth even further.

HE, Librarian/eresources staff:

Provide title and linking information to url resolvers e.g. SFX and discovery platforms e.g Primo, so that titles can be surfaced in our discovery layer, where our users will be searching, instead of them having to actually visit historicaltexts.jisc.ac.uk to perform their initial search.

Q11. There are a range of possible enhancements we could add to Historical Texts. So we can plan developments in line with what would be most useful to the community, please rate how useful the following features and new content would be for you.

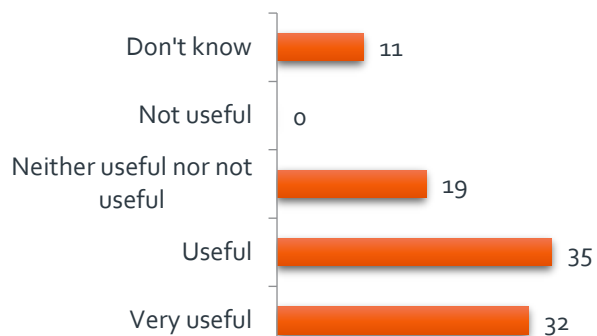
This question was optional and 97 responses were received. Most of the suggested enhancements were rated as useful or very useful by well over half of the respondents. In particular enhancements to variant spelling (78 responses), the addition of the Burney collection (73 responses) and image match search (67 responses).

The addition of the UK Medical Heritage Library received a slightly more mixed response with just over half of the ratings as useful or very useful (53) but 11 ratings of not useful. Whether a new collection is useful to a researcher will depend on their particular area of research though anyway.

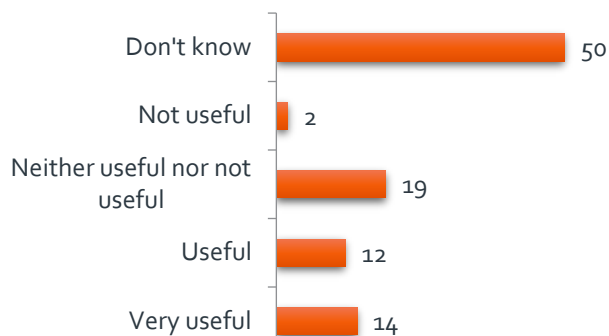
Just under half of the respondents (50) said they didn't know whether an application programming interface (API) would be useful, however, this will only be of interest to those researchers who want to manipulate the data without going through the user interface.

Category	Very useful	Useful	Neither useful nor not useful	Not useful	Don't know	Total
a. Enhancements to variant spelling	43	35	14	2	3	97
b. Image-match search (like Bodleian Ballads: http://balladsblog.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/blog/570)	32	35	19	0	11	97
c. Availability of an API	14	12	19	2	50	97
d. New collection: The Burney collection (http://www.jisc-collections.ac.uk/Catalogue/FullDescription/index/94)	42	31	10	5	9	97
e. New collection: UK Medical heritage library (http://www.jisc.ac.uk/news/wellcome-library-and-jiscisc-announce-partners-in-19th-century-medical-collections-digitisation)	28	25	22	11	11	97

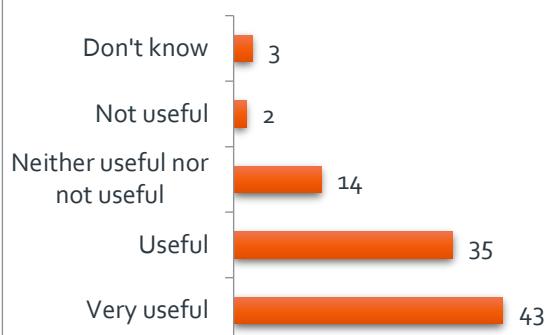
Image-match search



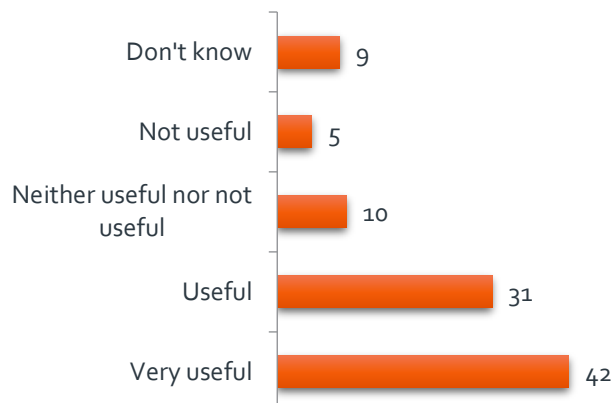
Availability of an API



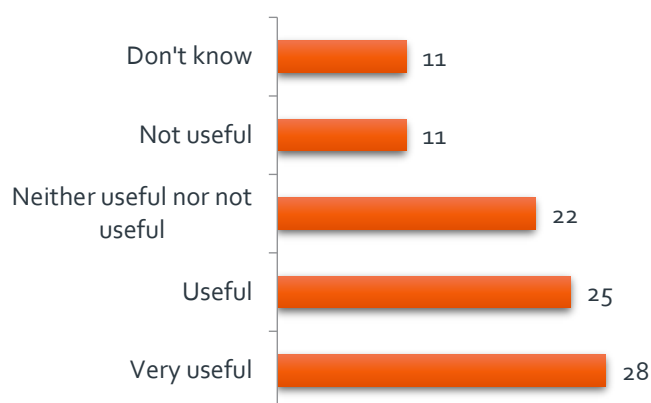
Improved variant spelling



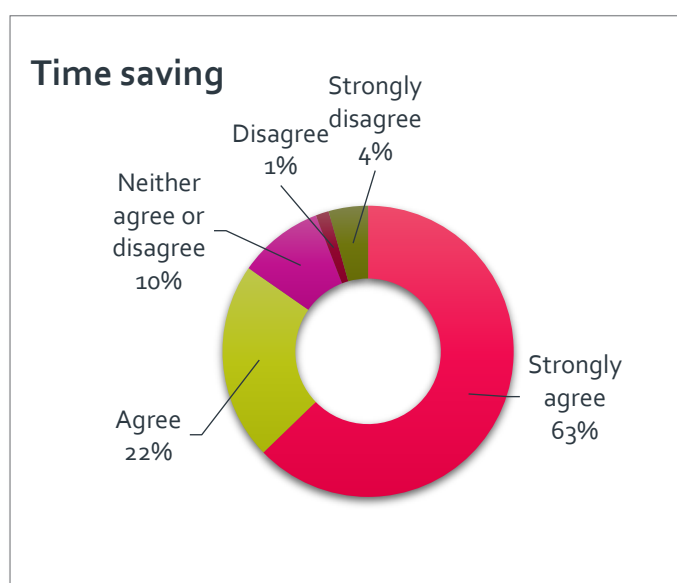
Burney collection



UK Medical Heritage Library



Q12: My work would take longer if Historical Texts were not available.



We were pleased to see the majority of respondents (85%) agreed or strongly agreed their work would take longer if Historical Texts was not available. This is consistent with results from previous years and from the reasons given it's clear that online access to the content in the service, avoiding the need to travel to a holding library, is an important reason.

Of the 116 respondents who strongly agreed or agreed, the largest groups were researcher/readers (31), postgraduate students (29) and undergraduate students (24).

Of the 27 respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed, the largest groups were researcher/readers (11), postgraduate students (9) and librarians/e-resources staff (5).

Category	No of responses		
	2014-15	2013-14	2012-13
Strongly agree	86 (63%)	43 (51%)	63 (39%)
Agree	30 (22%)	26 (31%)	43 (26%)
Neither agree or disagree	13 (10%)	10 (12%)	29 (18%)
Disagree	2 (1%)	0 (0%)	8 (5%)
Strongly disagree	6 (4%)	5 (6%)	19 (12%)
Total	137 (100%)	84 (100%)	162 (100%)

A selection of reasons why the category 'strongly agree' was selected can be found below:

HE, Retired senior lecturer:

I can examine thoroughly, in one day, texts that it would take me a week of travelling just to look at.

HE, undergraduate student:

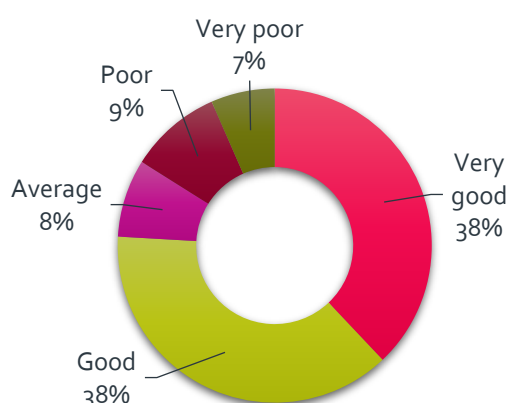
Nowhere else has the same range of sources available in one place.

:

I would not have found anywhere near the amount of primary sources had this not existed

Q13: How would you rate your overall experience of Historical Texts over the last 12 months?

Overall experience over last 12 months



76% of respondents rated their overall experience as very good or good, which we're very pleased to hear, but 16% indicated it was poor or very poor. An optional part of the question was to give a reason for the response.

Reasons given for very good or good responses included ease of use, improvements on previous platform and response to problems flagged up.

Reasons given for poor or very poor responses included some features available in EEBO / ECCO are not available, out of focus images, problems locating periodicals, results returned. Developments are in progress which will address some of these issues.

This particular question has not been asked in previous surveys.

Category	No of responses
	2014-15
Very good	52 (38%)
Good	52 (38%)
Average	11 (8%)
Poor	13 (9%)
Very poor	9 (7%)
Total	137

A selection of comments for various categories can be found below.

Very good (HE, Researcher/reader):

Ease of use and great range of resources. The search controls are much better than other databases I've used. Thank you!

Very good (Other sector, Librarian/e-resources staff):

Have moved from using the EEBO / ECCO sites for full text searching. The Historical texts site has better search, hurts my eyes less and it's really useful to be able to see the full text transcription alongside the digital object.

Very good (HE, Researcher/reader):

Very good now new version of website available. Before June 2014 it was just impossible to download anything. Complete nightmare of a website!.

Very good (HE, Researcher/reader):

See above about how you addressed a problem I flagged up. Nice work.

Average (HE, Lecturer/tutor):

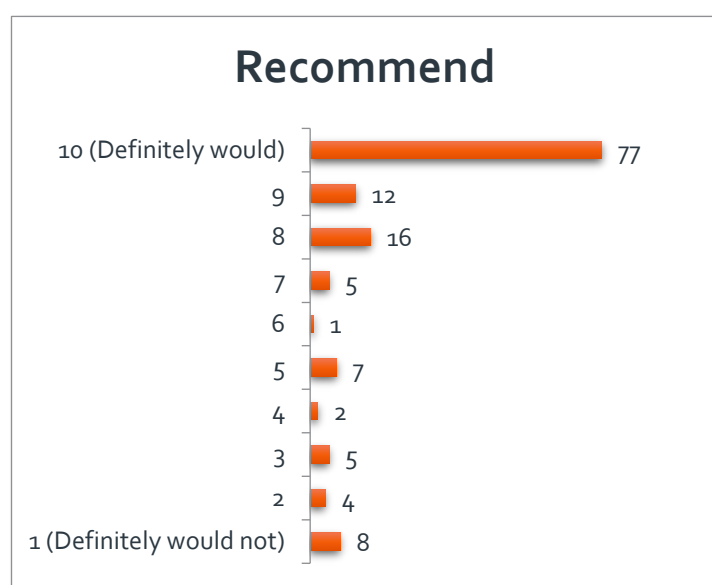
I sometimes find advanced searches difficult to get right-it's a bit fiddly , I'm not always sure I am using it correctly but with research deadlines looming and the pressures of teaching I don't want to spend a lot of time educating myself as to the finer points of your system. This may be a product of my age but there are a lot of older people who are conversant enough with searching intelligently but who are exhausted by the multifarious demands of different IT platforms all of which have their own particular logic.

Poor (HE, Lecturer/tutor):

Access to C17th periodicals. I work on news. I cannot find materials in a systematic fashion.

Q14: Based on your experience over the past year, how likely would you be to recommend Historical Texts to a colleague?

We were very pleased to see that over half of the respondents (56%, 77 out of 137 respondents) gave Historical Texts the highest recommendation rating of 10, indicating that they definitely would



recommend the service. In fact 77% of respondents (105 out of 137) gave Historical Texts the highest three scores of 10, 9 and 8, with some adding comments to say they already do recommend it.

A small minority gave low ratings and some of those mentioned preferring the EEBO or ECCO interfaces provided by ProQuest and Cengage.

A few gave a rating of 1, but some of those gave very positive feedback and responses in the rest of the survey, which suggests that perhaps the 1 to 10 scale might have been

interpreted incorrectly in a few cases.

A selection of reasons for some of the high and low ratings can be found below.

Rating of 10 - Definitely would recommend (Other sector, Librarian/eresources staff):

Already do, regularly - to new users of the library, and anyone still using EEBO / ECCO for search.

Rating of 10 - Definitely would recommend (HE, undergraduate student):

it makes searching or primary sources very simple and even if it is not successful it still helps in pointing me in the right direction or brings to lights other areas of research i may not have considered previously

Rating of 10 - Definitely would recommend (HE, researcher/reader):

There's no alternative for serious research in English Literature of the relevant periods.

Rating of 5 (HE, undergraduate student):

I like it, but it could be more user friendly.

Rating of 1 (Definitely would not recommend) (HE, lecturer/tutor):

It needs improved. I used to flit in and out of it and now I labour.

In previous surveys we asked respondents to rate the service using different categories and the responses can be found below. In 2013-14 40% of respondents strongly agreed that they would recommend the service and in 2012-13 it was 39% though, so this is improving year on year.

Category	No of responses	
	2013-14	2012-13
Strongly agree	34 (40%)	63 (39%)
Agree	32 (38%)	35 (22%)
Neither agree or disagree	9 (11%)	31 (19%)
Disagree	3 (4%)	15 (9%)
Strongly disagree	6 (7%)	18 (11%)
Total	84 (100%)	162 (100%)

Q15: In the future we may be looking for volunteers to share their opinion of, or tell us how they use, Historical Texts and/or other Mimas services. This will help us improve our services. If you are willing to participate, please enter your email address below.

Thank you to everyone who provided their contact details. We will be contacting people who were kind enough to leave their details to request their feedback on developments in future.

Thank you

We would like to thank everyone who completed the survey for taking the time to provide this valuable feedback. All comments have been reviewed by the Historical Texts team and are already informing developments on the service, and the support and training we provide for it, to ensure that Historical Texts continues to meet the needs of the community.

We're keen to hear feedback at any time, so please do contact our helpdesk at historicaltexts@jisc.ac.uk.

Historical Texts team