

Copac User Survey November 2014

“Incredibly useful! Fantastic! [...]” [UK HE Librarian]

Our Annual User survey helps us to gain an insight into how well the Copac service is supporting your research and other activity, to identify the areas where you feel we could be doing better, as well as to gather your thoughts on new facilities that you would value.

In the 2014 survey we are delighted that overall the survey respondents were positive about the service and we have some valuable feedback to help us focus future development activity.

Many thanks to all those who completed the survey. We particularly appreciate that so many respondents expressed an interest in being involved in ongoing Copac development. Last year we contacted a number of survey respondents who took part in detailed testing of changes to the Copac interface. This is enormously valuable for us as the service develops – we couldn't do it without you.

There is a short summary of the survey below, followed by a more detailed presentation of the results.

Result overview

“The more obscure, the more likely Copac will be the only place to find it.” [Non-UK Lecturer/Professor]

Who uses Copac?

Most Copac users are from the UK (79%) and Europe (13%) with the remainder from countries widely spread across the world, giving researchers everywhere a picture of the wealth of research materials available in the UK.

The largest group of Copac users are from Further and Higher education (UK 62%), with the remainder based in a range of organisations in both the public sector (eg. museums and galleries, public libraries) and the private sector (eg. publishing, bookselling), as well as independent and personal researchers. This HE background is reflected in the fact that Copac is well used by university students and staff (UK 39%), the next largest category of user being library staff (UK 37%).

In terms of subject background it is unsurprising that the Humanities and Social Sciences feature most strongly, but there are users with an interest in subject areas across the board from the Sciences and Medicine through to the Creative Arts.

Is Copac valued?

Inevitably in this type of survey it is likely to be the regular users that will see the survey and respond. However, it is still interesting to see that many respondents are regular users of Copac, with some 74% of UK users saying they make use of the service at least once a week. For some people Copac is clearly an important support for their research and other activity.

In addition to the survey respondents, 343 people selected the 'first time user' option which took them out of the survey before they are asked any questions, allowing them to try using Copac. This is 24% of all those interacting with the survey. So it is not a static user community, we are getting new users coming to Copac.

The survey results show that time saving is an important feature, with most respondents (UK 92%) agreeing that Copac saves them time. The fact that the interface is seen as easy to use (UK 93%) is also likely to be part of its appeal, with some users comparing Copac favourably with other local and union catalogues that they use. And we are pleased to know that that most respondents (UK 98%) would recommend the Copac service to others.

What do Copac users most like?

Of those that responded to this question the answers often covered multiple issues; the feedback has been assigned to broad categories so the percentages reflect the number of aspects of the service mentioned rather than the number of users.

Many comments (50%) mentioned the range of contributors covered, along with location information, as being of particular value. This breadth of coverage also permits other activities such as rarity checking, which we have included in the same grouping. *"[...] Copac saves me a great deal of time searching individual library catalogues."* [UK Academic researcher]

However many comments also mentioned the ease of use and range of facilities provided (25% of comments), whilst the data quality, the level of detail, and the reliability of the data were also mentioned as important (20% of comments). *"Ease and speed and clarity"* [UK Lecturer/Professor]

What do Copac users most want to change?

Again, the feedback from respondents often included mention of multiple aspects of the service across a wide range of areas, so the percentages reflect the number of comments rather than number of respondents. But in looking at the change requests it has to be remembered the largest single group is those who have made no comment or in some cases actively prefer no change (50% of survey respondents). *"I find COPAC to be very satisfactory as it is, and I have recommended its use to colleagues in other countries as a result of its quality of information provided."* [UK Academic researcher]

In terms of changes requested 14% of comments included a request for changes or additions to the available facilities, with a further 10% of comments including requests for changes to the interfaces, for example *"Permalink available to each item"* [UK Lecturer/Professor]

Some 8% of comments were concerned with increasing the database coverage, with some wanting to see an increased range of university library catalogues on Copac,

whilst others mentioned specialist institutions, eg: *“More library catalogues, especially those that are not necessarily academic.” [UK Postgraduate student]*

Record quality improvements and additions were mentioned in some 5% of comments, whilst a similar 6% of comments mentioned improvements to deduplication. These are areas that overlap to some degree as the ability to deduplicate records within Copac is influenced by the quality and completeness of the data.

Some comments expressed concern with response times (2%), whilst by contrast the feedback in the ‘most liked’ responses mentioned ‘speed’ as a positive aspect of the service. Someone’s experience of response times will be strongly influenced by the type of search they are carrying out, but we know it is a problem for some users and this is an area we are currently working on.

Next steps?

Our major task in 2015 is to move Copac onto a new cloud platform. This will support the growth of the service as we continue to expand the number of contributing libraries, something requested by many survey respondents. It will also allow us to experiment with the introduction of some new search facilities and improve some of the existing ones.

Once the hardware move is complete we will be looking again at the survey results to see how we can best implement some of the changes and enhancements requested in the interface and search facilities. Alongside this we are looking to work further on the Copac records, to continue the process of enhancing the deduplication and to see where we can improve data quality. The scale of the database means all data processing activity has to be automated, thus we need to err on the side of caution and the deduplication etc. will never be perfect; but there is more we want to do in this area.

Our annual survey is an important means for us to gather input into the ongoing development of the service. The feedback helps us to focus on the areas receiving most comment, as well as to look at the range of new facilities requested to see how we can best respond to changing requirements. In all of this we have to bear in mind that the single largest group of respondents had no requests for change and some users actively asked us not to change anything. We need to work hard to ensure that, whatever changes we make, we don’t lose the simplicity of the interface which has always been a valued feature of the service.

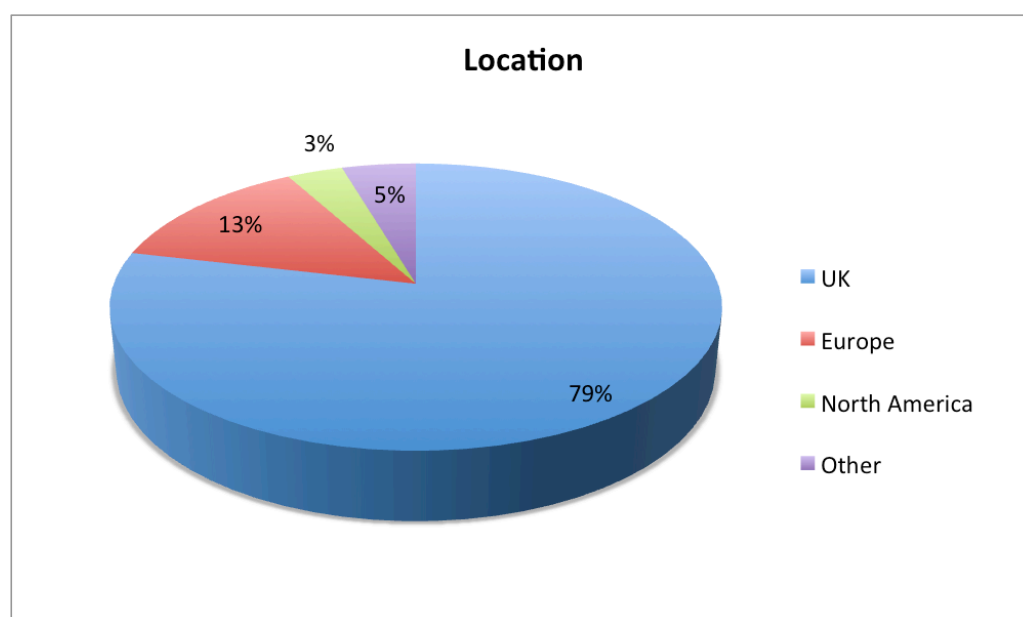
Survey Data Summary

The Copac Annual User Survey was available from 04/11/14 to 08/12/14 and we received 1,073 completed surveys. We had another 343 responses to the 'first time user' option, which bypasses the full survey. This suggests the Copac user community is far from static, with 24% of people defining themselves as first time users. Whether any of those first time users went on to complete the survey later we don't know. Percentages are rounded to nearest whole number.

Q1. Where do you study/work?

"COPAC Has been a remarkable resources for me (and my students). It's less well known among American academics than it should be. I am delighted to have it as a references source. The interface is much simpler and more logical (and informative) than [... other union catalogue]." [Non-UK Academic researcher]

The majority of users are UK based (79%) with another 13% from Europe. But there are a range of other countries represented, notably Australia and Japan.

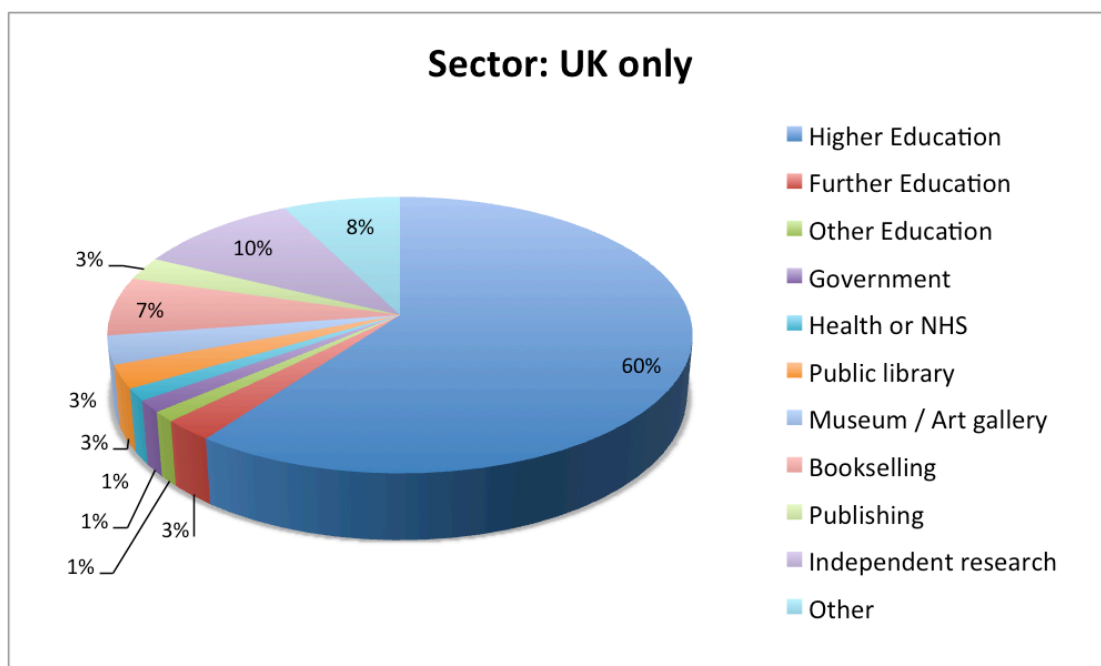


Location	Number (No.)	Percentage (%)
UK	844	79%
Europe	143	13%
North America	37	3%
Other	49	5%
Total	1073	100%

Q2. In which sector do you work?

"I am producing a systematic review [...] at the moment and Copac is an essential tool." [UK Lecturer/Professor]

The largest single group of users are in the Higher Education sector (UK 60%). 'Other' is a diverse group, but includes students, staff from a range of different types of library, as well as some respondents whose work crosses both FE and HE.

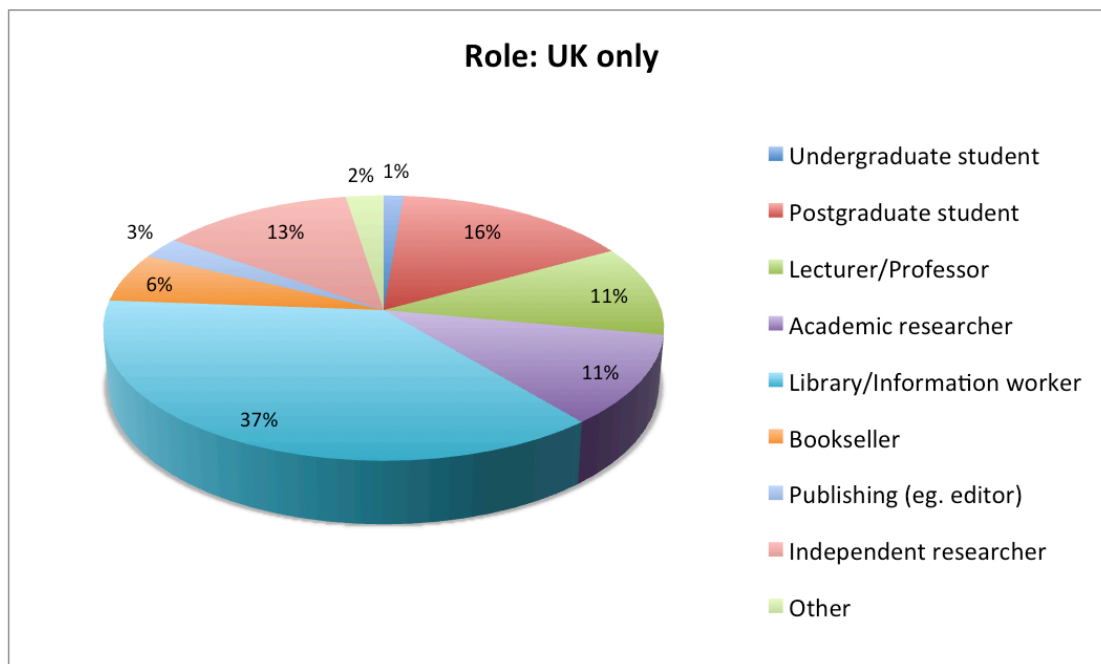


SECTOR	UK		Non-UK		All	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Higher Education	507	60%	123	54%	630	59%
Further Education	21	2%	4	2%	25	2%
Other Education	10	1%	4	2%	14	1%
Government	12	1%	6	3%	18	2%
Health or NHS	12	1%	1	0%	13	1%
Public library	23	3%	22	10%	45	4%
Museum / Art gallery	28	3%	3	1%	31	3%
Bookselling	58	7%	9	4%	67	6%
Publishing	23	3%	9	4%	32	3%
Independent research	87	10%	20	9%	107	10%
Other	63	7%	28	12%	91	8%
Total	844	98%	229	101%	1073	99%

Q3. In which role are you using Copac?

“Ease of use. Simplicity of layout and clear results. Other similar sites [...] are a nightmare.” [UK HE Librarian]

The largest group includes academic staff and students (UK 39%) followed by library staff (UK 37%) many of whom are from the HE sector.

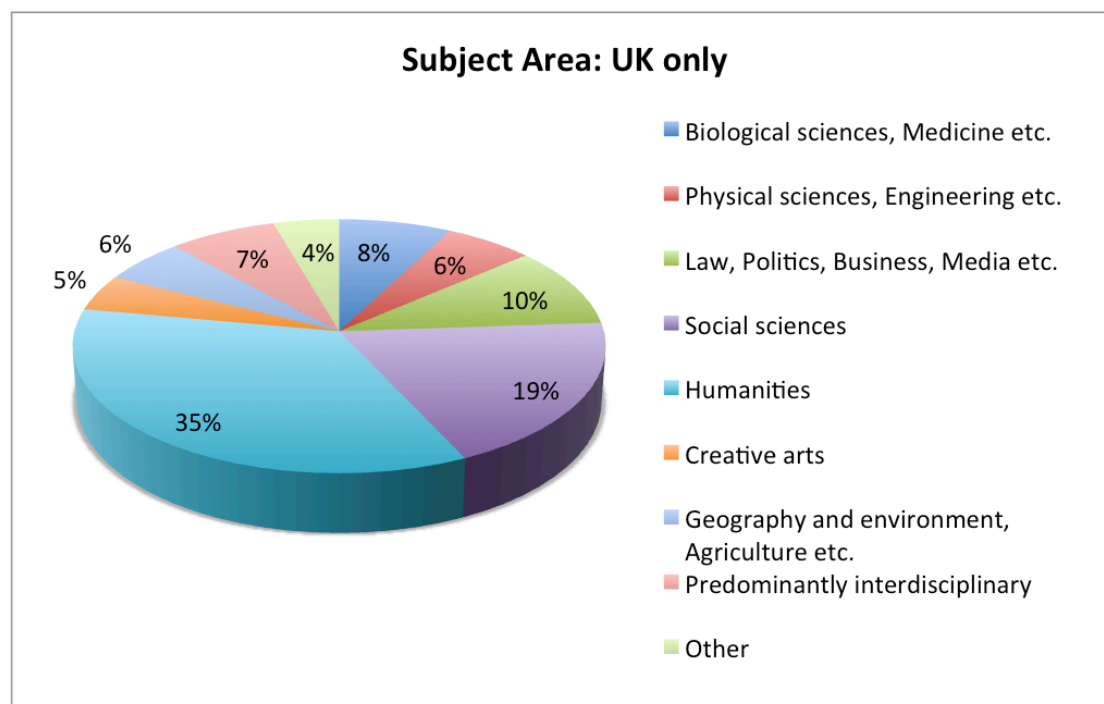


ROLE	UK		Non-UK		All	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Undergraduate Student	11	1%	8	3%	19	2%
Postgraduate student	132	16%	7	3%	139	13%
Lecturer / Professor	93	11%	36	16%	129	12%
Academic researcher	93	11%	25	11%	118	11%
Library staff / Information worker	314	37%	99	43%	413	38%
Bookseller	51	6%	11	5%	62	6%
Publishing (eg. editor)	22	3%	8	3%	30	3%
Independent researcher / Personal interest	107	13%	27	12%	134	12%
Other	21	2%	8	3%	29	3%
Total	844	100%	229	99%	1073	100%

Q4. Please indicate your subject area: (select all that apply)

"The interface has good functionality for accurate bibliographical searching, which is vital for rare books work, but increasingly rare in modern library 'discovery platforms'." [UK HE Librarian]

Many respondents selected more than one subject area, so the percentages reflect the number of subjects not the number of respondents. In particular, library staff may work across multiple areas of study.

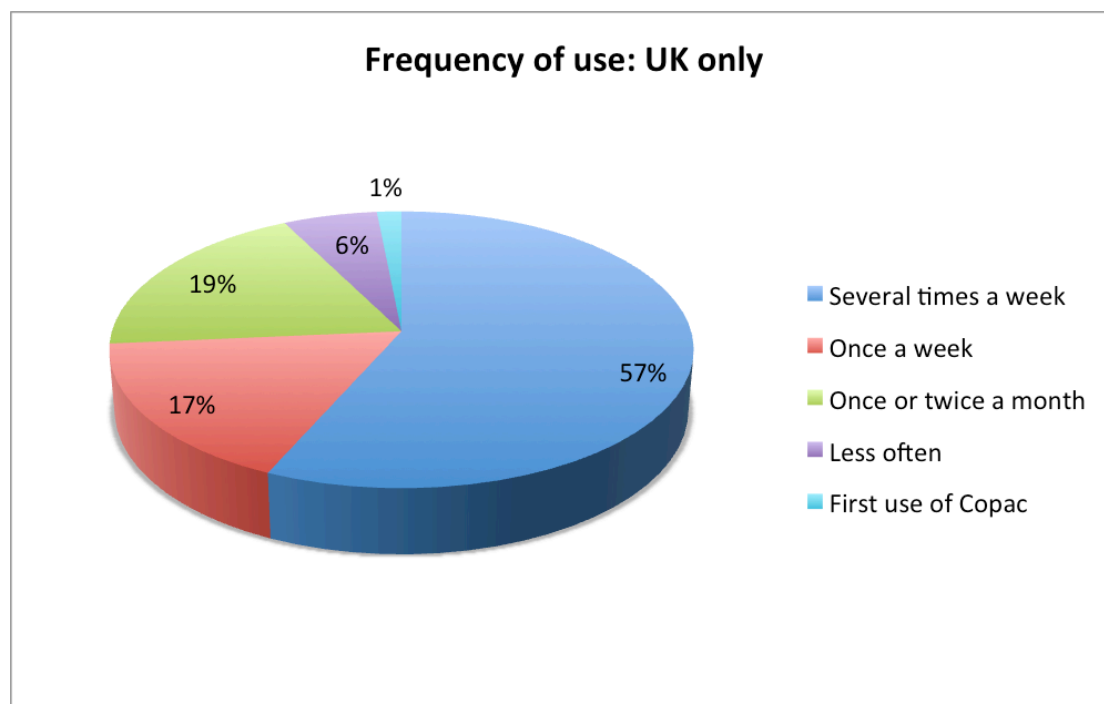


SUBJECT	UK		Non-UK		All	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Biological sciences, Medicine etc.	188	8%	26	4%	214	7%
Physical sciences, Engineering etc.	148	6%	32	5%	180	6%
Law, Politics, Business, Media etc.	251	10%	88	13%	339	11%
Social sciences	469	19%	156	23%	625	20%
Humanities	856	35%	244	36%	1100	35%
Creative arts	114	5%	24	4%	138	4%
Geography and environment, Agriculture etc.	139	6%	26	4%	165	5%
Predominantly interdisciplinary	180	7%	44	7%	224	7%
Other	110	4%	32	5%	142	5%
Total	2455	100%	672	101%	3127	100%

Q5. On average, how often do you use Copac?

"It is easier to search for specific books on Copac than on my university's online catalogue" [UK Postgraduate student]

There are many regular Copac users, with some 74% of UK respondents saying they use the service at least once a week.

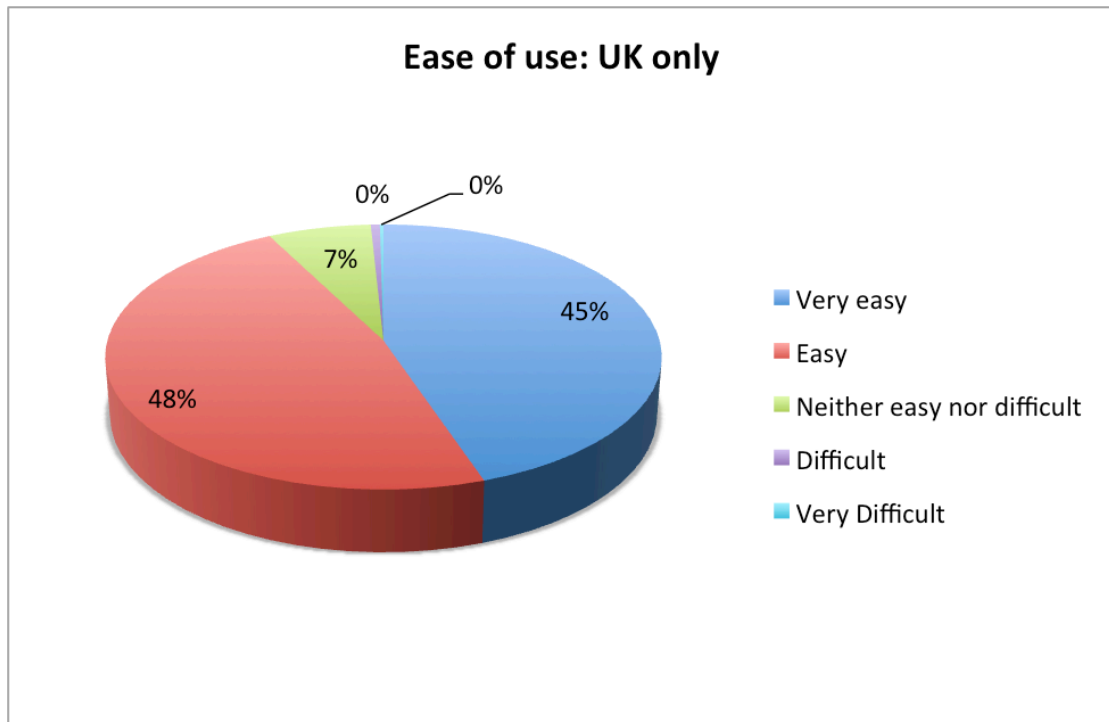


FREQUENCY OF USE	UK		Non-UK		All	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Several times a week	478	57%	117	51%	595	55%
Once a week	143	17%	32	14%	175	16%
Once or twice a month	160	19%	45	20%	205	19%
Less often	50	6%	24	10%	74	7%
This is my first use of Copac	13	2%	11	5%	24	2%
Total	844	101%	229	100%	1073	99%

Q6. How do you find using Copac?

"It's incredibly easy to use, very simple layout which makes life even easier. Just a really well thought out website that is executed well." [UK Undergraduate student]

Most users report finding Copac easy to use (UK 93%), with most of the remainder neutral (UK 7%).

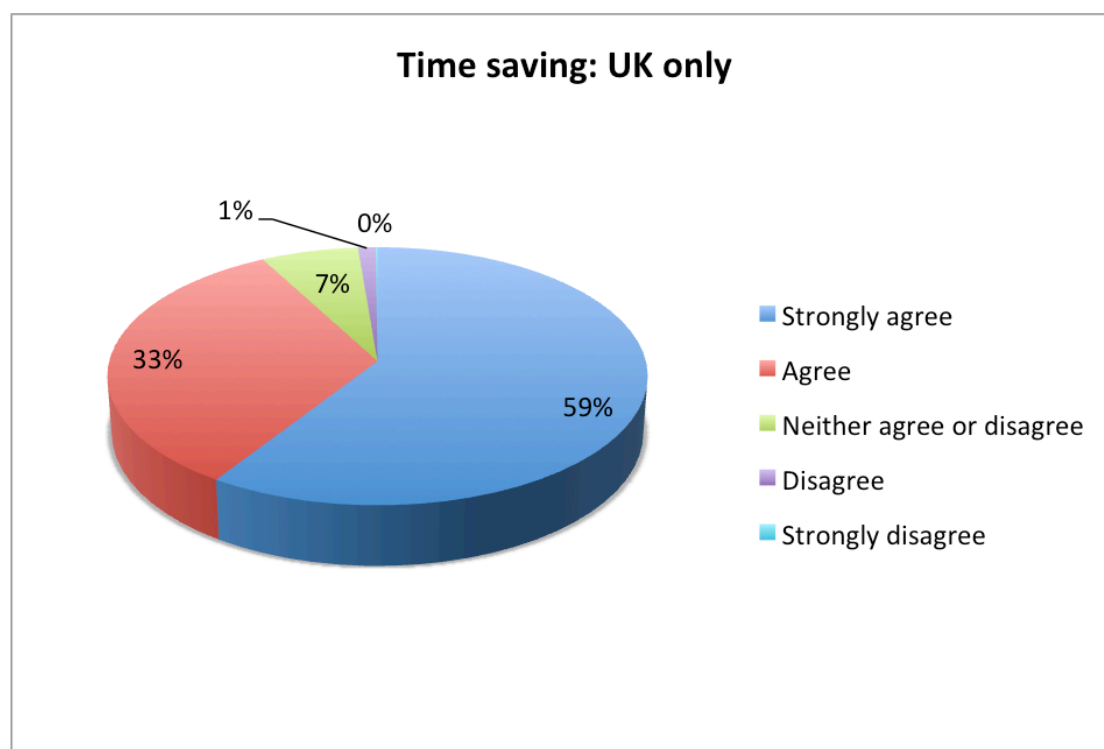


EASE OF USE	UK		Non-UK		All	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Very easy	378	45%	101	44%	479	45%
Easy	402	48%	102	45%	504	47%
Neither easy nor difficult	57	7%	24	10%	81	8%
Difficult	5	1%	1	0%	6	1%
Very Difficult	2	0%	1	0%	3	0%
Total	844	101%	229	99%	1073	101%

Q7. My work would take more time if Copac was not available.

“The quick access to what is held across the UK. When ordering interlibrary loan items, to cite Copac as a source that the book or article exists speeds up the process of actually getting my hands on the work.”
 [UK Lecturer/Professor]

Most users find that Copac saves them time (UK 92%), with most of the remainder being neutral (UK 7%).

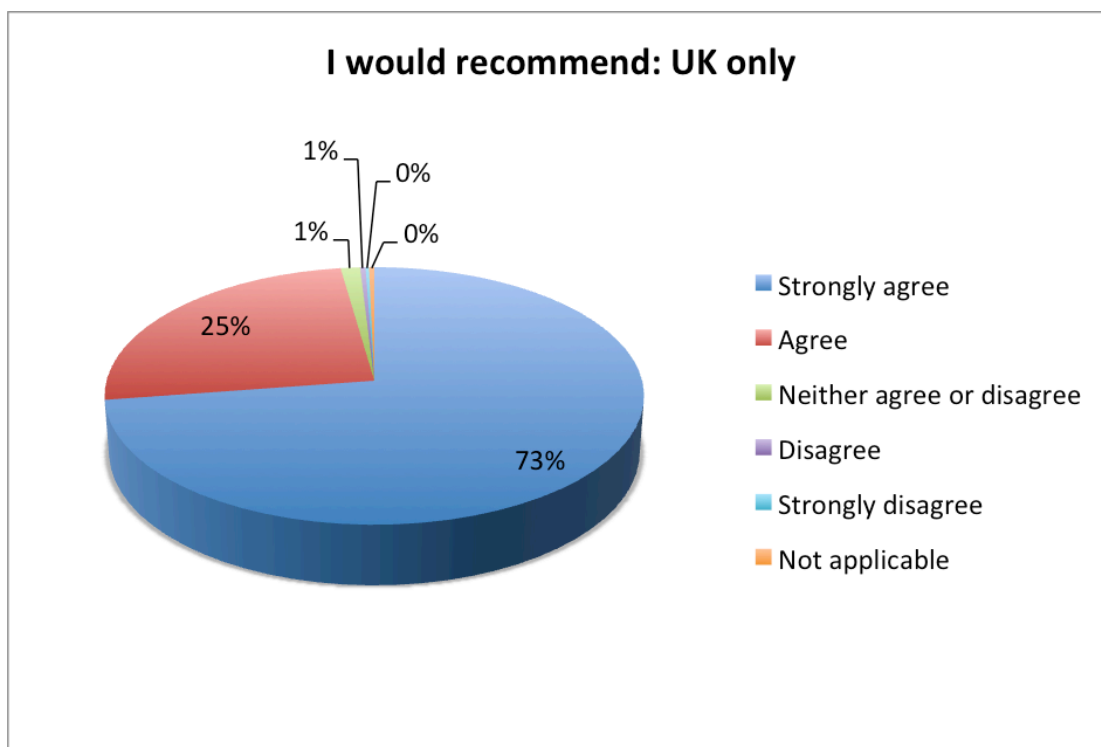


	UK		Non-UK		All	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
TIME SAVING						
Strongly agree	499	59%	102	45%	601	56%
Agree	279	33%	94	41%	373	35%
Neither agree or disagree	55	7%	28	12%	83	8%
Disagree	10	1%	4	2%	14	1%
Strongly disagree	1	0%	1	0%	2	0%
Total	844	100%	229	100%	1073	100%

Q8. I would recommend Copac to others.

"It is an essential tool of research [...]" [UK Lecturer/Professor]

Almost all respondents would recommend Copac (UK 98%) with a further 1% being neutral. For a few users the question is not applicable.

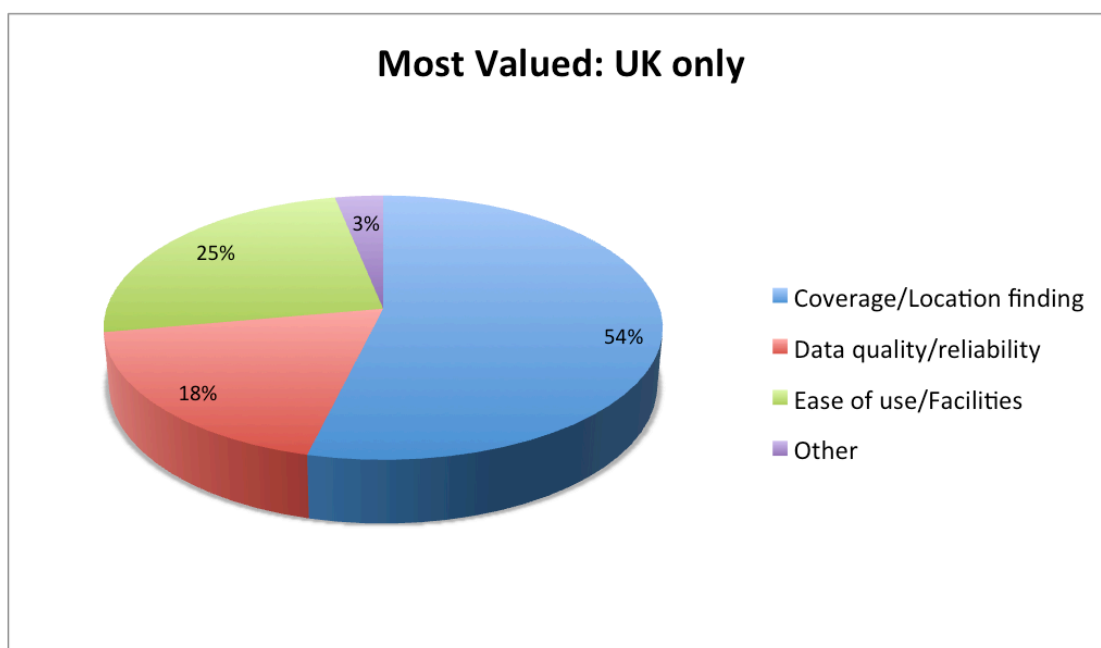


RECOMMEND	UK		Non-UK		All	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Strongly agree	613	73%	134	59%	747	70%
Agree	212	25%	88	38%	300	28%
Neither agree or disagree	11	1%	3	1%	14	1%
Disagree	3	0%	1	0%	4	0%
Strongly disagree	2	0%	2	1%	4	0%
Not applicable	3	0%	1	0%	4	0%
Total	844	99%	229	99%	1073	99%

Q9. What do you most value about Copac?

“High quality bibliographic data I can trust and information about rarity/availability of particular books across the sector” [UK HE Librarian]

In asking people what they most value about Copac the responses often covered more than one issue, so the percentages reflect the number of areas mentioned rather than the number of users.

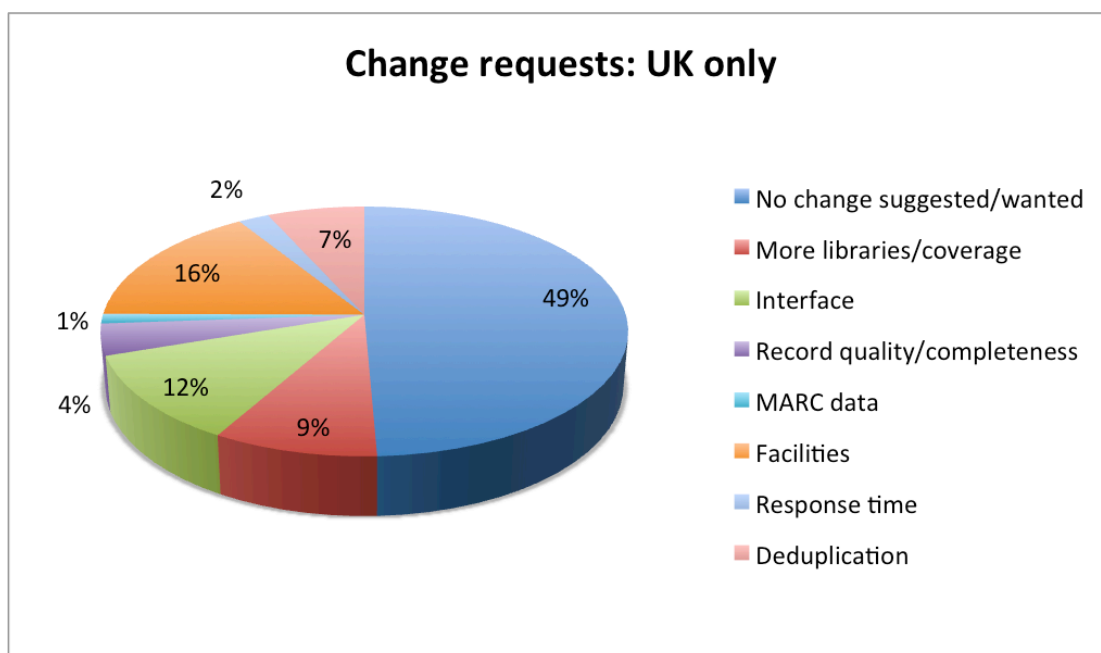


MOST VAUED	UK		Non-UK		All	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Coverage/Location finding	489	54%	65	33%	554	50%
Data quality/reliability	167	18%	53	27%	220	20%
Ease of use/Facilities	224	25%	57	29%	281	25%
Other	29	3%	21	11%	50	5%
Total	909	100%	196	100%	1105	100%

Q10. What changes could we make that would most improve Copac?

"It is an eminently usable bibliographic and retrieval tool [...] Copac is my favourite library catalogue." [UK Professional association, Librarian]

In asking people what changes they would most like to see, many of the responses included more than one element, so the figures reflect the percentage of issues raised rather than the number of respondents. Those users who provided no response, or explicitly said they were happy with Copac as it is, were grouped to form the 'No change suggested/wanted' category.



CHANGE REQUESTS	UK		Non-UK		All	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
No change suggested/wanted	436	48%	147	60%	583	50%
More libraries/coverage	79	9%	11	5%	90	8%
Interface	102	11%	15	6%	117	10%
Record quality/completeness	36	4%	27	11%	63	5%
MARC data	11	1%	2	1%	13	1%
Facilities	141	15%	25	10%	166	14%
Response time	19	2%	7	3%	26	2%
Deduplication	60	7%	7	3%	67	6%
Other	31	3%	3	1%	34	3%
Total	915	100%	244	100%	1159	99%