Welcome any comments by libraries with similar projects and experiences
Background
The Technische Universität München (TUM) library was the first university library in Germany to be certified by TÜV with respect to its ISO 9001:2001 quality management.

One of the main objectives of our quality management policies is to measure customer satisfaction in order to constantly develop and improve our services. We have conducted surveys among students and academic staff in the past, but these were more generalised.

In terms of our Information Literacy (IL) programme we decided to introduce evaluations over longer periods of time to complement the existing short term evaluation.
Immediately after IL training events we give out feedback forms to participants to measure their attitudes to the event.
Participants are asked to rate the relevance of the individual topics, to evaluate teaching methods and leave general comments. These provide immediate feedback to the instructor. Once a year course coordinators compile and analyse the data and disseminate the results among the team of instructors.

Additionally, we decided to evaluate the relevance of the training content and its impact for participants in the long-term. How sustainable are the skills acquired in the training and which ones would participants apply in their current studies?

As library instruction at TUM is usually one off, there is limited opportunity for formative evaluation. We agreed on a survey among participants using self-assessment.
Aims and Objectives
Self-report surveys do not measure skills or knowledge, but give an idea of students’ perceptions and attitudes.

We are aware of the limitations of the chosen method as explained by Schilling and Applegate (2012).
We decided to survey our main types of workshops of our standard programme at that time, excluding any embedded training.
The introductory library workshop entitled “Get ready for your studies” comprises literature search for books and journals, interlibrary loan and internet search.

The advanced library workshop “Get ready for your degree” includes developing a search strategy, finding the right database for one's subject, searching in databases and referencing.

Further we evaluated the basic workshop on the reference management software Citavi.
The timeframe investigated covered the period between January 2012 to July 2013, which at the time of the survey was between 6 and 24 months ago.

In total we had 96 events to survey. The participants were mainly students, although there were a number of staff who attended the reference management workshops.
The survey was conducted between February and March 2014 as an online survey using the TUM licenced software Evasys. In line with data protection regulations we were allowed to address institutional email accounts only so we were only able to contact less than half of the participants, which came to a total of 690 emails. It was open for 2 weeks.

The survey was prepared in consultation with a librarian adept in surveys. All questions were created with the team of the course leaders and discussed several times. The survey specialist at the university provided us with helpful advice on methodology and technical issues to do with the software.
The questionnaires comprised topics, which were course-specific as well as generic questions. We had 12-14 scaled and multiple choice questions and five open-ended text questions.

This is an example for the Questionnaire re. the advanced library workshop

The questionnaire was divided into five sections. In the first section, the main objectives and terms of the survey were explained, and the participants had to indicate their academic status and faculty. In the second section, we asked participants to assess the significance of the different topics taught in the course in retrospect. These were scaled and correlated to the questions on the feedback form. They were followed by two open-ended questions for comments and any suggestions for additional content. The third section included a range of questions on self-assessing skills and behavior, self-perception and confidence regarding tools and skills we had identified as learning goals. Again, there was an opportunity to leave comments. The forth section focused on participants’ attending other workshops and the awareness of our e-Learning-material. In the final section we asked participants which topics they found most useful and if they had any suggestions for improvement.
The overall return rate of our survey was 23%; in sum..

The return rate was similar across all workshops.

144 questionnaires in total.
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71% (introductory workshop) and 83% (advanced workshop) of the participants acknowledge that their research skills have improved since they participated in the workshop. Over all course types and over all topics, a clear majority of participants (76%) rated the content as very important (51%) or important (25%).

In the comments section we received quite a few statements about the positive effect of the workshops, e.g.
Great presentation and helpful instructor! This event has supported me in writing a great dissertation.

This workshop was part of my Masters' degree studies. However, the skills I have acquired in this workshop would have been very helpful for my Bachelor…

This was by far the best training at TUM and I have received the top grade for my dissertation! The instructor, Ms. (.), was very good! (.) TOP!
Differences short-term and long-term feedback
Contrary to the feedback we get immediately after the workshops, where participants in the introductory library workshop are not sure about the importance of internet searches we had a consistent high evaluation on this in the long term.
On average, only 61% rated this topic as important in the short-term, and with that it was rated as least important.

In the long-term term, it turned out to be the most important issue with 87% rated this topic as being very important (67%) or important (20%).
On the other hand, more than 34% of participants said that they are not able to find relevant sources on the Internet.

At first, this seems rather contradictory.

This could indicate that we do not teach the right content, but we did not receive any comments that would support this presumption. We interpret these numbers as indicating that being more knowledgeable in this area, participants assessed their own skills more critically than before.
Referencing
On the short-term feedback forms on the advanced library workshop, only 57% of participants rated referencing as important. Additionally, we regularly received feedback about this section as being too extensive.

From the current results, it seems this topic is valued more highly over time. In retrospect more than 75% rated this topic as very important (57%) or important (18%). Also, it was mentioned by a few participants as an area where they would have liked even more input.

Nevertheless, 40% of participants do not feel confident in this area. Individual comments indicate that there is great uncertainty about non-existent regulations at the university.
More about correct referencing, please (esp. in connection with the recent plagiarism scandals) — whereas collaboration with faculties is needed in order to develop a standard referencing style across the university or at least the faculties. Currently each chair seems to have its own referencing style…
A relatively high number of participants (30%) of the Citavi workshop indicated that they are currently not using Citavi on a regular basis.

At least in some cases this was not their own decision as explained in the comments:
These comments indicate that EndNote is widely-used among TUM staff and industry, which leads to students switching software.

Therefore, we can see the usage statistics for Citavi in a different light.
There were a few comments mentioning the lack of awareness across the university and suggesting embedding the workshops as compulsory components in the curriculum.
A lot of students, even in their last year, are not aware of the range of resources on offer. Everybody should attend this workshop.

(... I had no idea and none of the lecturers has mentioned them)

Both of your workshops were very helpful. All students from semester 5 should attend these.

Maybe you should do more to advertise the fact that you offer workshops regularly and that they are not time-consuming. I know quite a few other students, who would have benefitted from the workshop, but were not aware of it...
Implications for our IL programme
There is a clear need to raise awareness of our IL programme across the university.
Currently we use a mix of tools to promote our services. In a brainstorming meeting with staff from marketing, we will be looking into more student-focused and unconventional ways of promoting our services, and as suggested use student reps or the student union as disseminators. At the same time, we plan to contact faculties whose students are less represented at the workshops to promote our services. Ideally, IL sessions would be embedded in their curriculum.
The results demonstrate that training on internet search is very important to our users. We will continue teaching it, and acknowledge the need for keeping up to date in this area.
We have recently started developing a guideline on referencing, which we seek to agree with the TUM ombudsperson for the academic code of practice.

The aim is to publish a set of generic guidelines for the faculties at TUM and to encourage them to commit to one referencing style.

At the same time, we are preparing set of elearning materials on referencing for students to refer to any time.
For the future, we plan to repeat long-term surveys on our IL programme on a regular basis.

Next time we would like to include other course types such as the workshops for PhD candidates and for researchers.

In order to be able to address more participants, we will include a declaration of consent regarding contacting participants on the registration form.

(The pretest for the survey should include more non-library related people to avoid misunderstandings in the questionnaire.)
Conclusion
Long-term evaluation of our IL programme helps to understand students’ attitudes and perceptions.

→ Complements the range of efforts to measure customer satisfaction for TUM library.
Long-term effect of our trainings and suggestions for improvement
→ Improving our programme
Results show that our workshops do make a difference for the students
→ Strengthen our position within the university
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References


Questions…?

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