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White, Sue and Stone, Graham

Measuring library impact on learning at the University of Huddersfield

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SCONUL 2010 Conference



Measuring library impact on learning at the University of Huddersfield

Measuring library impact on learning at the University of Huddersfield

Recent research at Huddersfield has shown a correlation between library use and final degree result.

It has also revealed the extent of usage/non-usage of library resources across courses.

What was measured?

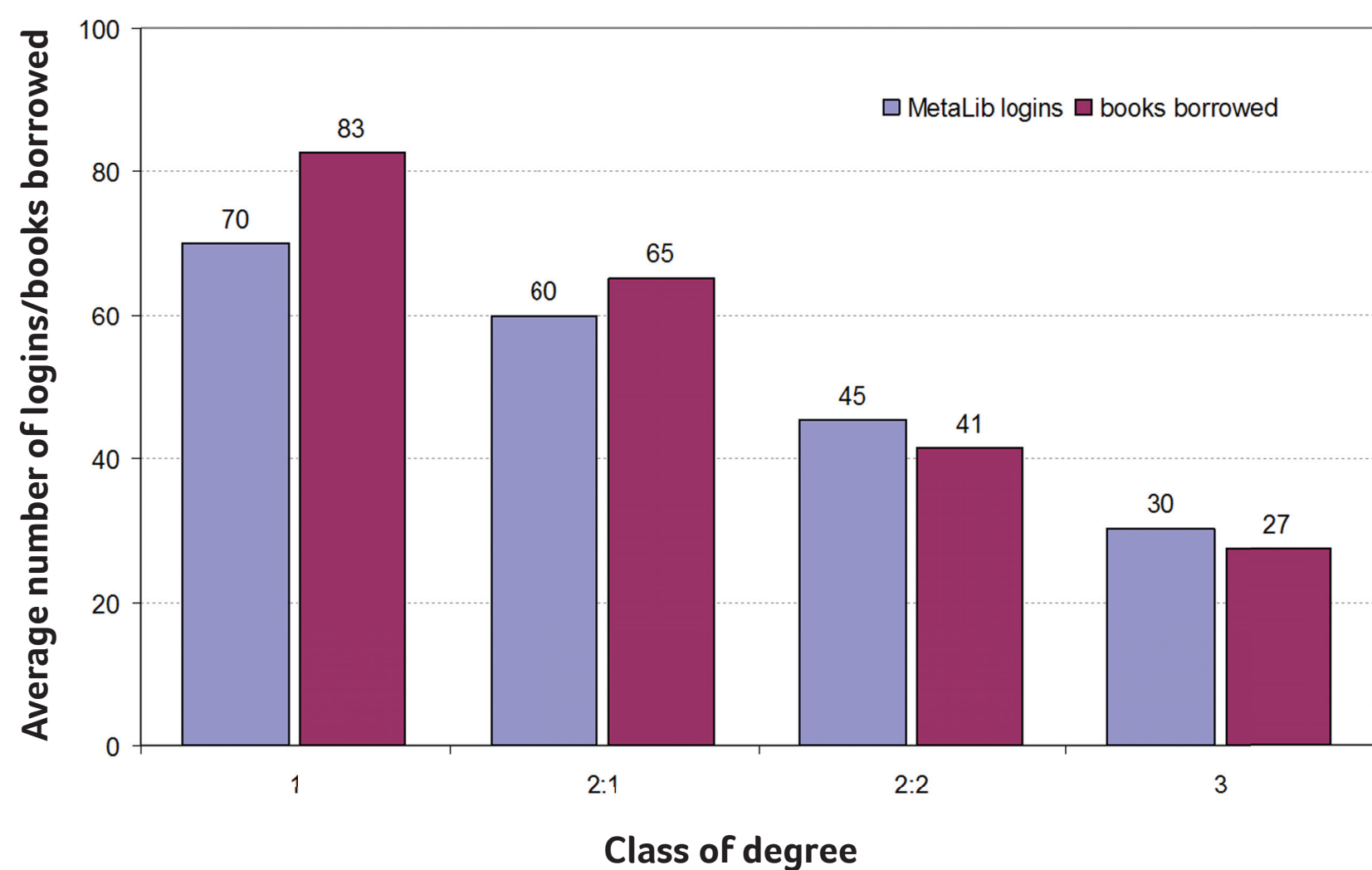
- Access to e-resources (using logins to MetaLib recorded regardless of location and study)
- Book loans (using statistics from the Horizon Library Management System)
- Visits to the library (using gate entry statistics from Sentry)

This data was then matched against the Student Records system.

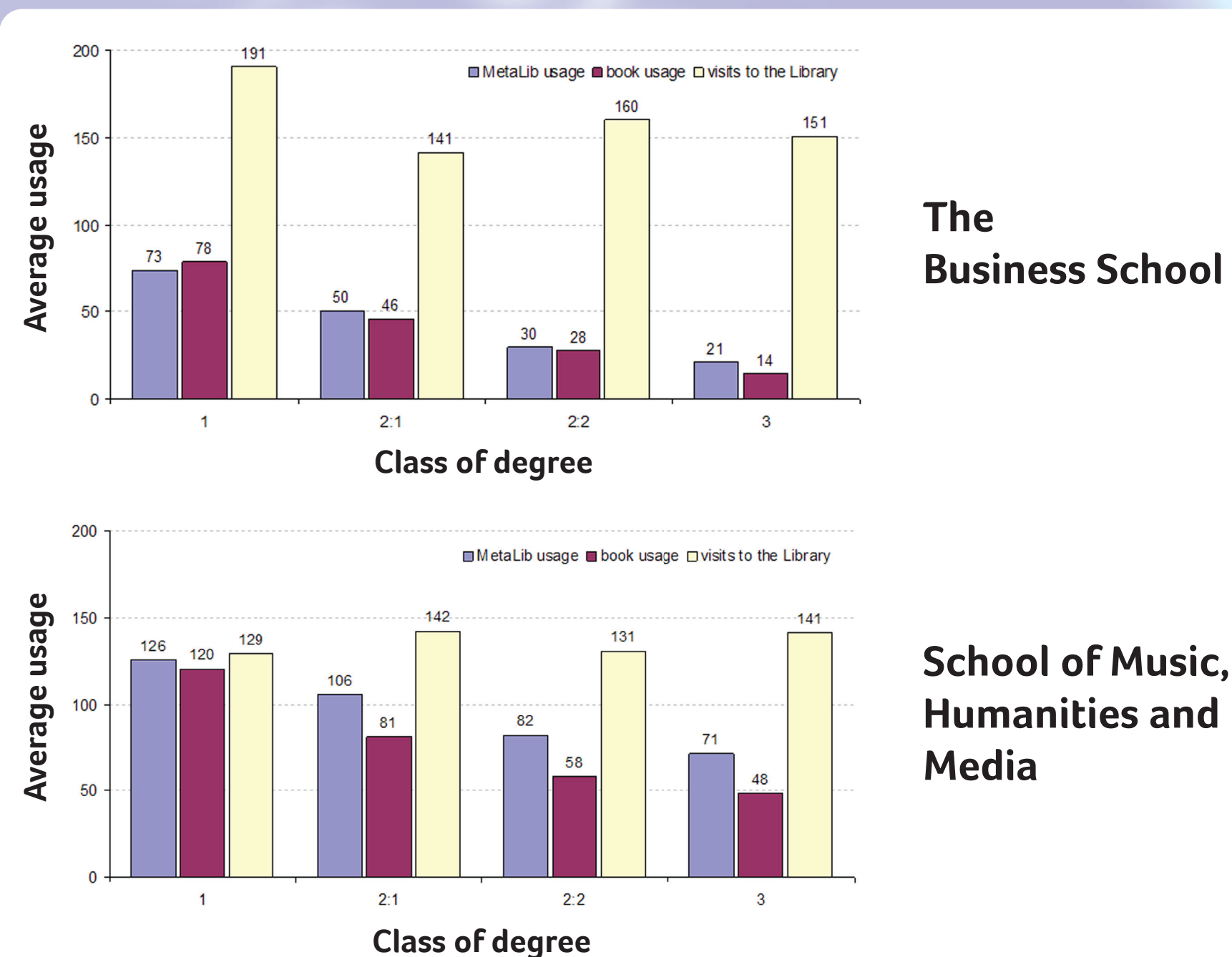
What were the results?

- In broad terms, a correlation between final degree and access to e-resources and book borrowing.
- A less significant link with library visits, explained in part by the common entrance with student support services.
- Significant levels of low or non use of library resources.

Average total library usage v final degree class (all 2007/8 & 2008/9 graduates)



Examples of average total library usage v final degree class (2007/8 & 2008/9 graduates)

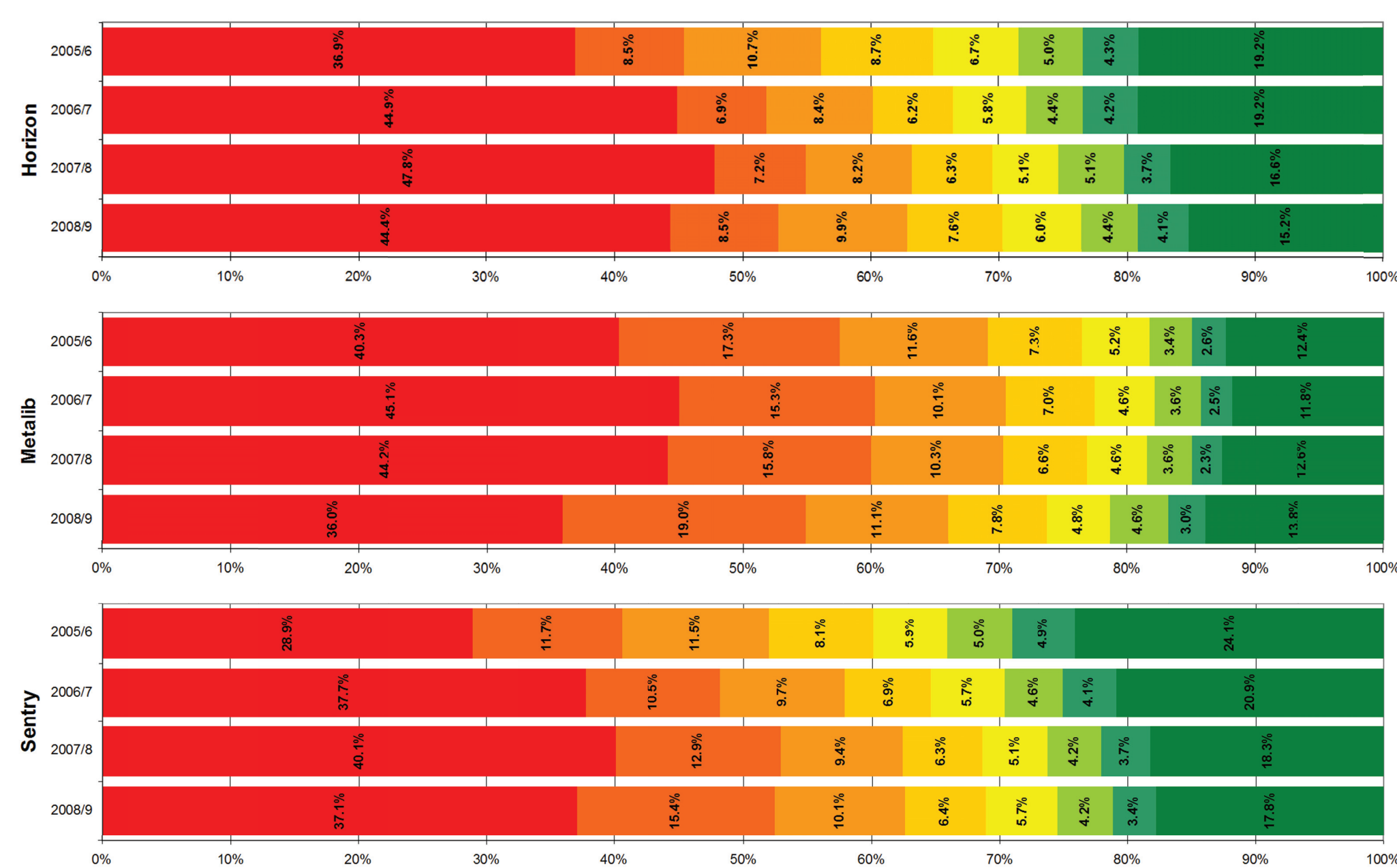


Points to note

- Pattern of usage varies between Schools but there is an overall correlation with book and electronic usage.
- Important to acknowledge subject differences. There are often pedagogic reasons for apparent low usage of library resources. Practice-based subjects in Art and Design may have less of a requirement to borrow books or access e-resources than Humanities-based subjects, for example.
- This is not a cause and effect relationship and libraries must be careful not to overstate the case. There will be many variables which impact on a student's final degree result, and use of library resources will be just one.

Library usage/non-usage data

Usage data for the School of Human and Health Sciences, all cohorts 2005/6 - 2008/9



The graphs to the left illustrate library usage/non-usage data extracted for each School.

- Data shows extent of library usage ranging from no use (red) to relatively high use (green)
- Appears to be a significant amount of low/non-use. Despite steady increase in most subjects in recent years, there is clearly potential for much greater usage

Next steps

- Apply tests of statistical significance to data
- Share findings with Heads of Department and academic managers
- Liaise with course tutors to explore reasons for unexpectedly low usage
- Agree Action Plan, to include:
 - Targeted promotion of resources to students and staff
 - Review of induction
 - Embed information skills training
 - Targeted resources allocation - agree Resource Statement with each department
- Monitor improvements
- Benchmark with other institutions

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Contact:

Sue White s.a.white@hud.ac.uk
Graham Stone g.stone@hud.ac.uk



University of
HUDDERSFIELD
Inspiring tomorrow's professionals

Sue White
Director of Library Services

Graham Stone
Electronic Resources Manager