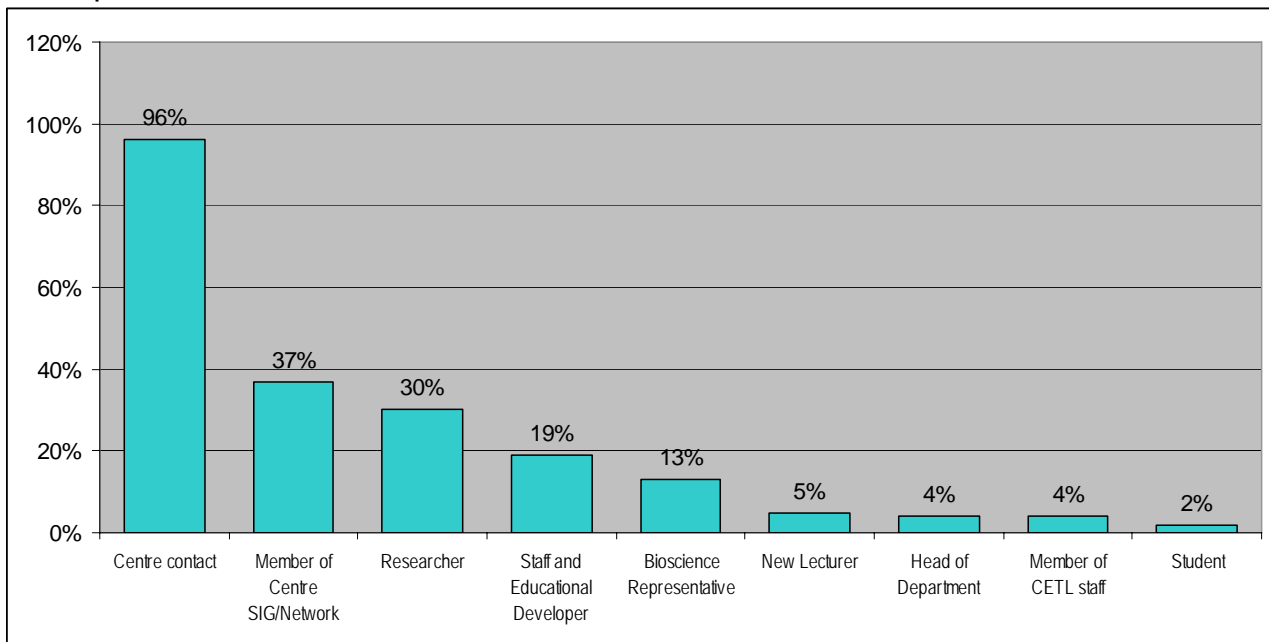


Web Survey summary

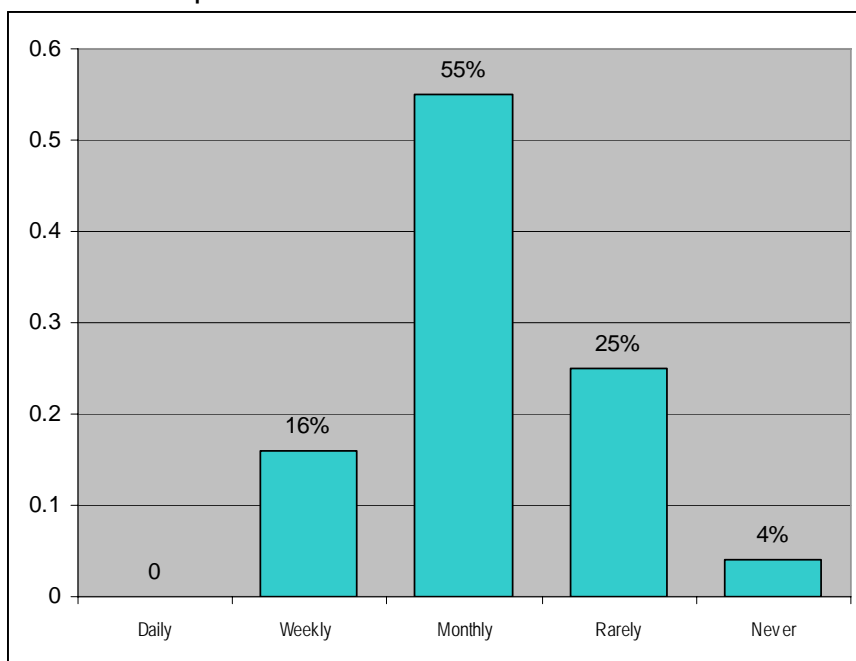
Summary:

To further inform changes to the Centre for Bioscience website a brief web survey was sent to all Centre contacts in July 2007. We received 113 responses by the closing date. The web survey was also advertised on the home page of the existing web site. The nature of the respondents, the frequency of their visiting the site and the resources they are accessing offered no surprises. Overall, the feedback was fairly pleasing with 70% of respondents rating the site 'good' or 'very good' and the quality of content rating particularly well (82% 'good' or 'very good'). However, clearly work is still required to improve the website's effectiveness. The visual aspects and ease of navigation were particularly commented upon as requiring further work. Criticisms by some were however compliments from others – therefore both must be taken into account when enacting change (i.e. don't throw out what is working well by focusing only on the criticisms).

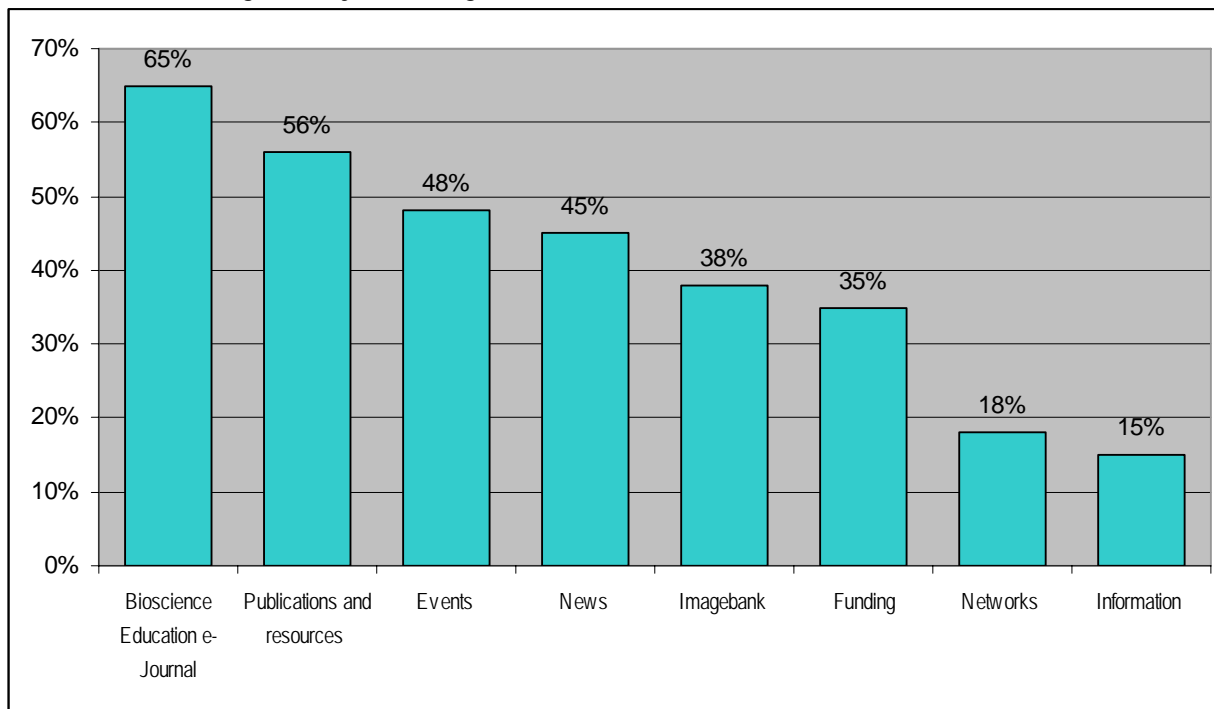
Who responded?



How often do respondents access the website?



Which of the following are they accessing information about?



Why do respondents normally visit the website?

Overall the written comments on why they visit the site support the above statistics. The range of comments about 'why visit' was very broad – funding, event information, resources, publications, news and information, the Bioscience Education e-Journal were all frequently noted in the free text. Comments also indicate our community are responding to prompts through the electronic updates (approx. 10 responses) as well as Bulletin articles (2 - 3 responses). Respondents clearly want to access resources and information for supporting their learning, teaching and assessment - and they want to be kept up to date with what is happening in bioscience learning and teaching. Seeking inspiration or new ideas was noted on several occasions. Further to this the community and networking aspect of the Centre's work was identified through a few respondents interested in what other institutions and individuals were up to.

Ratings

	Visual design and aesthetics	Navigation (access to content)	Quality of content	Readability of text	Effectiveness of site search	Overall Ease of use	Overall Satisfaction with site
Very Good	12%	17%	26%	24%	9%	19%	12%
Good	53%	35%	56%	53%	34%	41%	58%
OK	19%	36%	11%	15%	32%	32%	24%
Poor	10%	7%	0%	2%	4%	2%	0%
Don't know	1%	1%	3%	1%	15%	2%	2%
No answer	5%	4%	4%	5%	6%	5%	4%

Strengths and weaknesses – free text comments

The free text on weaknesses and the above ratings confirm the three areas requiring development are visual design (29% OK or Poor), navigation (43% OK or Poor) and the search function (36% OK or Poor). The visual aspect of the site was the most commented upon weakness (although wasn't reflected quite as strongly in the ratings). Comments included "looks a bit cobbled together"; "a bit scruffy"; "bitty", "cluttered homepage"; "muddled, too much on a page"; "home page is over busy".

The most consistent strength noted in comments was around the ease of use of the website - and secondly the fact there is a lot of information on one site was clearly important. The up to date/reliable information was noted around 8 times; 'clear and concise' was mentioned several times and linking people/sense of community also came through. People clearly enjoy the range of resources we offer and one person found the website aesthetically pleasing! The ability to get straight to relevant information from the home page was also noted a number of times as a strength, despite the same fact being regarded as a weakness with a lot of clutter on the home page mentioned frequently. Comments included "easy to read online", "easy website to find information on", "information is quick and easy to find", "not too cluttered", "a lot of information in one place", "I really like the initial page... you can see everything at a glance".

Therefore while the criticisms are valid particularly regarding the clutter on the home page – there are still a number of positives with the existing structure – therefore careful consideration before change occurs is crucial.

Other comments:

A clear need was for more links to be provided to information outside the Centre but relevant to learning and teaching in the biosciences - whether for funding, events, resources etc - in particular several comments were made about linking to other Subject Centre materials relevant to the biosciences (e.g. MEDEV and Maths); Supporting interdisciplinarity was also noted twice.

Action taken

Intuitive navigation and improved design were the two prime areas of development identified for the site prior to the survey. As the Centre has built its resources up over time, the old structure was making updating and adding material more difficult. Clearly our community agree with the need to improve these areas. The old site also failed to give a clear picture of 'what we do' on the home page. Therefore we have re-structured the site to provide a summary of the Centre's broad range of activity under the following headings:

- Events and Themed Work
- Resources and Publications
- Funding and Recognition
- Networks and Links
- News and Information
- About Us

In order to retain the strength of being able to quickly get to relevant information, the home page also contains a number of shortcuts to the following:

- Areas of Focus (for 07/08)
- A – Z of Resources
- FAQs
- Bioscience Representatives
- New Lecturers
- Staff and Educational Developers
- Science Learning and Teaching Conference
- Join the Centre
- Bioscience Education e-Journal
- ImageBank
- Upcoming Bioscience events
- Upcoming general events
- Event Reports
- Bioscience headlines
- Subject Centre Network
- Higher Education Academy

To ease the clutter of the home page we have reduced the amount of text previously found in the main body of the page – highlighting instead new activities and recent additions to the website in a bulleted list with links to further details.

Feedback from the survey particularly pointed to the need for increased information from external organisations, whether other Subject Centres or other organisations supporting learning and teaching in the Bioscience. We have started to

respond to this through our Networks and Links section and will continue to build this area over the next few months. We have also developed new pages to support our varying country communities – with pages for English, Scottish, Welsh and Northern-Irish based practitioners found through the Networks and Links section.

Increased engagement with the Centre is also a priority for a large variety of reasons – however the most important is to enhance our contact with practitioners in the biosciences who are developing their knowledge and experience of good practice in learning and teaching in the biosciences. Once this good practice has been identified we want to share this with a large audience to foster further innovation and development. We are therefore encouraging more users of the Centre's website to join the Centre network – making links to this page more obvious – and hopefully also making the benefit in doing so apparent.

With this restructure we hope navigation around the site is more intuitive – however to further assist we have added an A-Z of Resources and Frequently Asked Questions pages to help you find the information you need. We also have highlighted our enquiries service on the website – encouraging our community to get in touch with their questions on learning and teaching in the biosciences.