

An Evaluation of askON Ask Ontario's Virtual Reference Pilot Project



Academic Service Highlights – by the numbers

Who

- **66.7%** undergraduates, **10.2%** college students, **8.4%** graduate students, **6.6%** continuing ed.

What

- Questions were **54.9%** research-based, **20.6%** about library services/policies, **9.8%** fast fact, **12.0%** directional
- **34%** - took 10 to 20 minutes; **22%** - 5 to 10 minutes; **19%** - 20 to 30 minutes

How well

- **75.4%** resulted in students receiving better information than they could on their own
- **86.5%** indicated student satisfaction

Skills measured against RUSA guidelines for virtual reference success

- **89.7%** displayed askON staff enthusiasm
- **67.3%** demonstrated good/excellent listening/inquiring skills
- **80.5%** demonstrated confirmation of student's information needs
- **47.3%** demonstrated good/excellent search construction skills
- **38.5%** offered additional search tips and pointers
- **91.3%** confirmed that questions were answered before interaction

Training requirements

- **36.8%** demonstrated a need for askON service policy training
- **38.3%** demonstrated a need for RUSA guideline training
- **28.4%** demonstrated a need for training on the resources of participating libraries

Results derived from an analysis of a random sample of 333 academic transcripts from the askON pilot service (Jan-March, 2008).

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