



ARCHER2 User Survey

2024/2025



1. Document Information and Version History

Version:	1.0
Status	Final
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Reviewer(s)	Alan Simpson, Jo Beech-Brandt, Lorna Smith, Catherine Inglis

Version	Date	Comments, Changes, Status	Authors, contributors, reviewers
0.1	2025-08-07	Initial draft	Anne Whiting
0.2	2025-08-14	Analysis of data	Anne Whiting
0.3	2025-08-15	Review	Catherine Inglis
0.4	2025-08-19	Updated post review	Anne Whiting
0.5	2025-08-21	Review	Alan Simpson
1.0	2025-08-25	Final version post review	

Structure of this paper

Section 2 provides a description of the survey, its questions, the scoring and how it was constructed.

Section 3 gives some highlights of the comments provided by responders to the survey.

Section 4 provides an analysis of the responses received, comparisons to previous years and graphical distributions of the scores.

Section 5 lists the comments received in full and unedited form by question together with the ID of the anonymous respondent.

2. Description of the Survey

The ARCHER2 User Survey opened on 1 June 2025 and closed on 31 July 2025. The period covered by the survey was from 31 January 2024 to 31 July 2025. 40 responses were received from ARCHER2 users. The survey asked for ratings (on a scale of 1 to 5) with the following questions:

1. Please rate your overall experience of the ARCHER2 Service (required) [Very Dissatisfied (1) – Very Satisfied (5)]
2. Has the ARCHER2 hardware configuration met the requirements of your research? (required) [Not met any requirements (1) – Exceeded requirements (5)]
3. Has the software on ARCHER2 met the requirements of your research? (required) [Not met any requirements (1) – Exceeded requirements (5)]
4. If you have used the ARCHER2 service desk, please rate your experience [Very Dissatisfied (1) – Very Satisfied (5)]
5. If you have used the ARCHER2 documentation, did it provide the information you required? [Did not provide the information I required (1) – Provided all the information I required and more (5)]
6. If you have used the ARCHER2 website, please rate the quality of the content and ease of navigation [Very poor (1) – Excellent (5)]
7. Please rate your experience of any ARCHER2 Training you have used (either online or face-to-face)? [Very Dissatisfied (1) – Very Satisfied (5)]
8. If you have attended any ARCHER2 webinars or virtual tutorials, did you find the session worthwhile? [A complete waste of time (1) – Extremely interesting and useful (5)]
9. If you have used any of the ARCHER2 online training material, how useful did you find the material? [Of no use at all (1) – Extremely useful (5)]

Only the first three questions were compulsory for all survey respondents, but 93% of respondents also provided feedback to some of the optional questions. Users were also provided with the opportunity to offer comments or suggestions under all of the above headings. As previously with other services, user feedback received will be reviewed to identify opportunities for improvement.

The survey was constructed using Google Forms and embedded directly into the ARCHER2 website.

3. Executive Summary

This was the third ARCHER2 service user survey conducted and covers the period from 31 January 2024 to 31 July 2025.

The results of the 2024/25 annual ARCHER2 User Survey have been analysed. 40 responses were received with the mean results shown below (scores 1 representing “Very Unsatisfied” and 5 representing “Very Satisfied”):

Service Aspect	2024/5 ARCHER2 Mean Score (out of 5)
Overall	4.6
Hardware	4.0
Software	3.8
Service Desk	4.6
Documentation	4.1
Website	4.1
Training	4.4
Webinars and virtual tutorials	4.2
Online training	4.2

As can be seen users are very positive about the service, with a mean score across all questions of 4.6 out of 5, up from 4.4. in the previous survey. Where users have rated elements of the service under 3 or provided negative comments, the users will be contacted to obtain further details if they have provided contact information. A total of two users across all categories of feedback gave a score of 2, with no scores of 1.

For comparison purposes, the table below shows the satisfaction scores for the ARCHER2 service taken from the annual user survey run in 2022/24.

Service Aspect	2022/4 ARCHER2 Mean Score (out of 5)
Overall	4.4
Hardware	3.9
Software	3.8
Service Desk	4.6
Documentation	4.1
Website	4.1
Training	4.3
Webinars and virtual tutorials	4.2
Online training	4.2

Selected Quotes

The following unedited quotes reflect the tone of the majority of responders to the survey with regard to the ARCHER2 service:

- Nice and very helpful service for my research!
- Very satisfied experience using Archer2. It is now my essential platform for computation and simulation!
- The service desk has always been great, and the machine is also excellent and very reliable. The pre-compiled codes are working well too (I use Quantum Espresso and CP2K). My only issue is occasionally the length of the queue, so I'm increasingly using the short 20-minute queue repeatedly when my jobs are not too heavy.
- I enjoyed the Celebration of Science event

Quotes on the Service Desk (which reflect contributions from the HPC Systems Team, the User Support and Liaison Team and the centralised CSE team) echoes the particularly high ratings for this aspect of the service:

- Fast responses and very helpful, and understanding of user constraints and requirements.
- Fast response and quickly solved problems!
- Quick response time, very helpful.

4. Ratings

All questions asked responders to rate their satisfaction with each particular aspect of the survey on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 representing “Very Unsatisfied” and 5 representing “Very Satisfied”. Table 1 summarises the ratings for each aspect for 2024/25 and reveals how the all aspects of the ARCHER2 Service are rated highly by users. The number of responses was 40.

Service Aspect	Total Responses	Mean Score (out of 5)	Median Score (out of 5)
Overall Satisfaction	40	4.6	5
Hardware Config	40	4.0	4
Software Config	40	3.8	4
Service Desk	32	4.6	5
Documentation	36	4.1	4
Website	35	4.1	4
Training	21	4.4	4
Webinars and Virtual Tutorial	19	4.2	4
Online training	22	4.2	4

Table1: Summary of scores for different aspects of the ARCHER2 Service 2024/25

As can be seen from Figure 1, the overall satisfaction with the ARCHER2 service is very high with no responders rating the service below 4 on a 1-5 scale from “Very Unsatisfied” to “Very Satisfied.” The mean rating is 4.6, and the median rating is 5.



Figure 1: Distribution of scores for overall satisfaction with the ARCHER2 service (40 responses in total).

For the hardware and software (Figure 2 and Figure 3 respectively), the overall satisfaction with the service is high, with only 2 individual users rating the hardware and software below 3. There were no ratings of “Very Unsatisfactory” for the hardware or software on ARCHER2. The mean rating for hardware is 4.0 and for software is 3.8 (median is 4 for both).

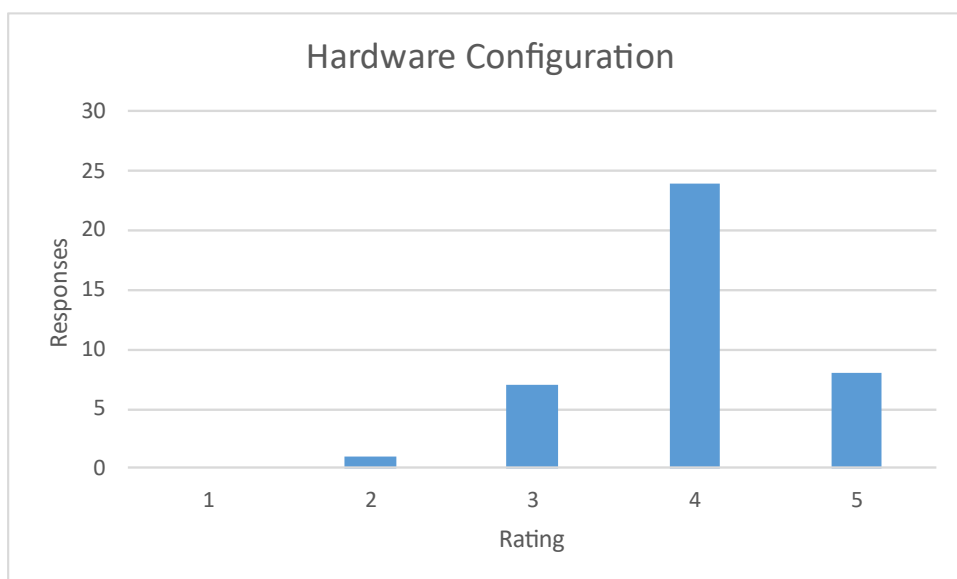


Figure 2: Distribution of scores for satisfaction with the ARCHER2 hardware (40 responses in total).

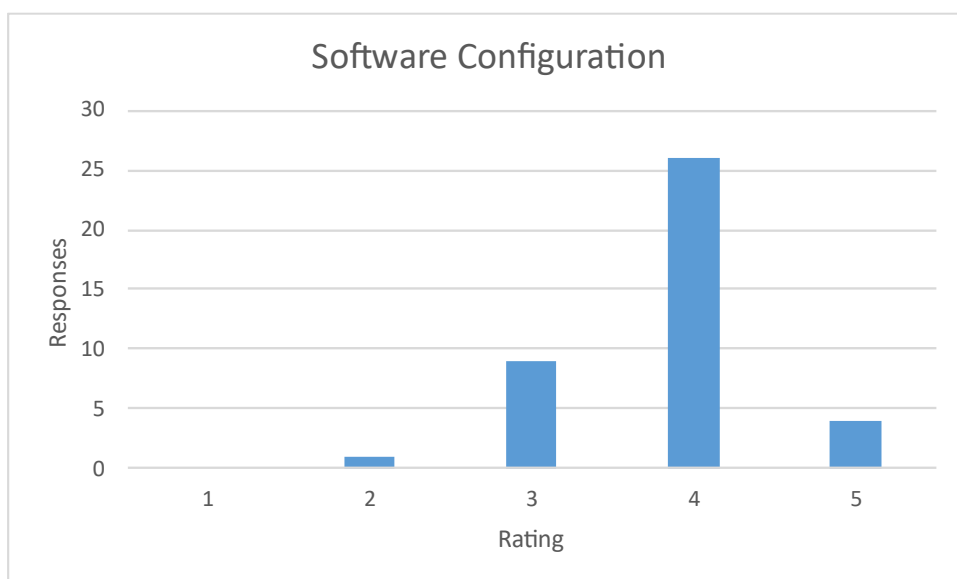


Figure 3: Distribution of scores for satisfaction with the ARCHER2 software (40 responses in total).

The satisfaction ratings for the ARCHER2 Service Desk showed a mean rating of 4.6 (median is 5). Of the 32 responses, 31 (97%) gave a score of 4 or 5 ("Excellent" or "Very good"). None gave a response below 3 ("Somewhat satisfied").

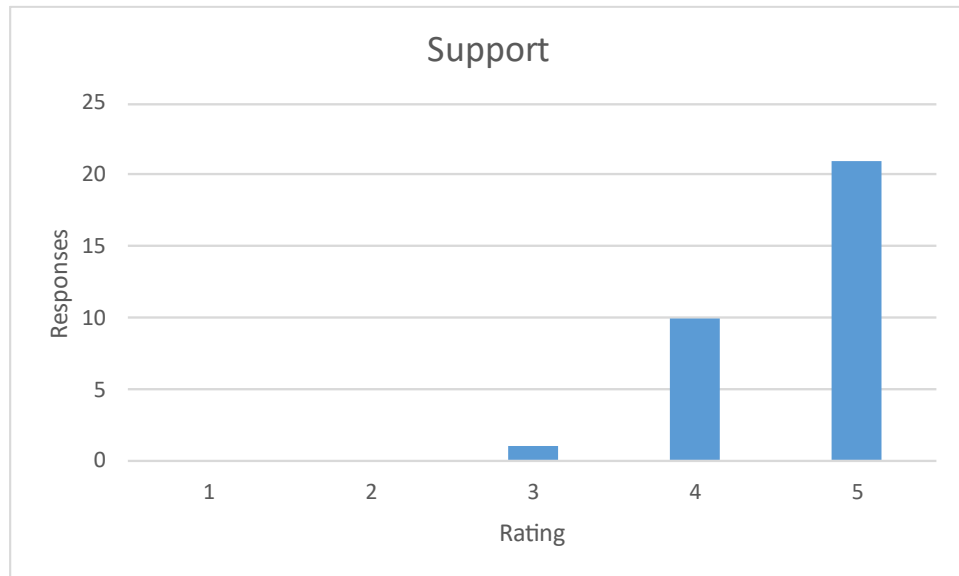


Figure 4: Distribution of scores for satisfaction with the ARCHER2 Service Desk (32 responses in total).

ARCHER2 documentation (Figure 5, mean = 4.0, median 4) and website (Figure 6, mean = 4.1, median 4) show the a high level of satisfaction No users provided a rating under 3.

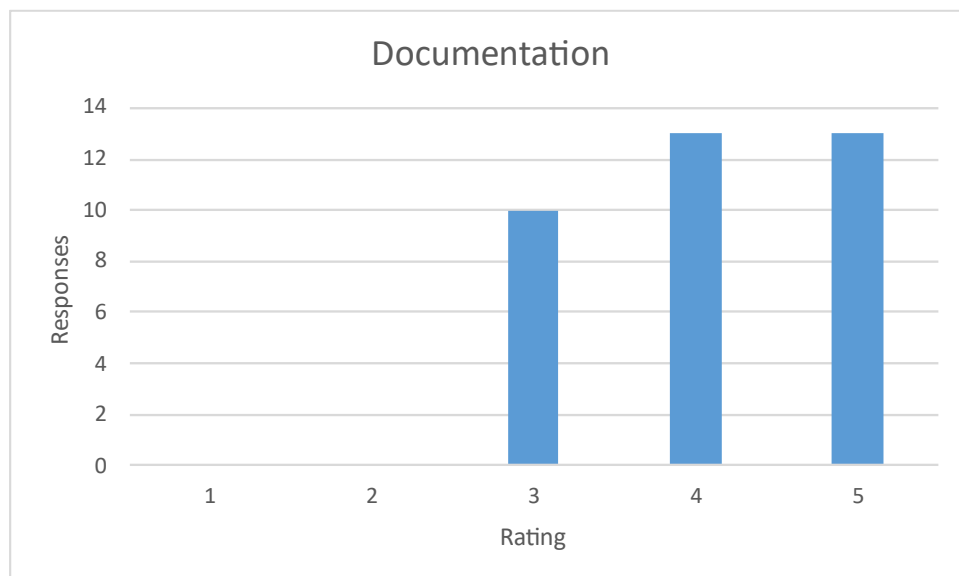


Figure 5: Distribution of scores for satisfaction with the ARCHER2 documentation (36 responses in total).



Figure 6: Distribution of scores for satisfaction with the ARCHER2 website (35 responses in total).

The results for ARCHER2 training (Figure 7, mean = 4.4, median = 4) are high and consistent with the course survey results presented in the CSE Service quarterly reports. 95 percent gave a score of 4 or over. There were no users with a rating of under 3.

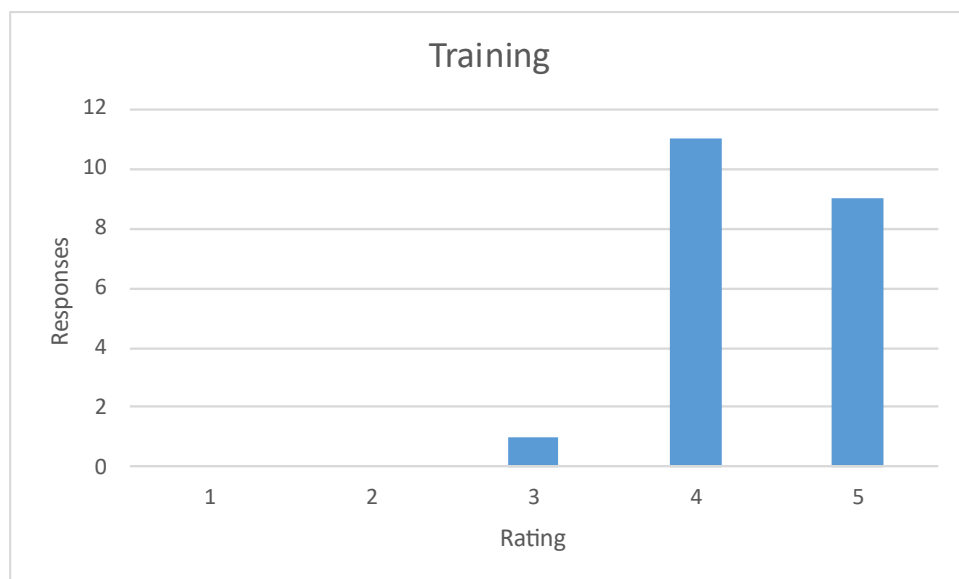


Figure 7: Distribution of scores for satisfaction with the ARCHER2 training (21 responses in total).

The webinars, virtual tutorials and online training show a very good satisfaction rating (Figures 8 and 9, mean = 4.2 and median = 4 for both). Neither received any responses with a score of under 3.

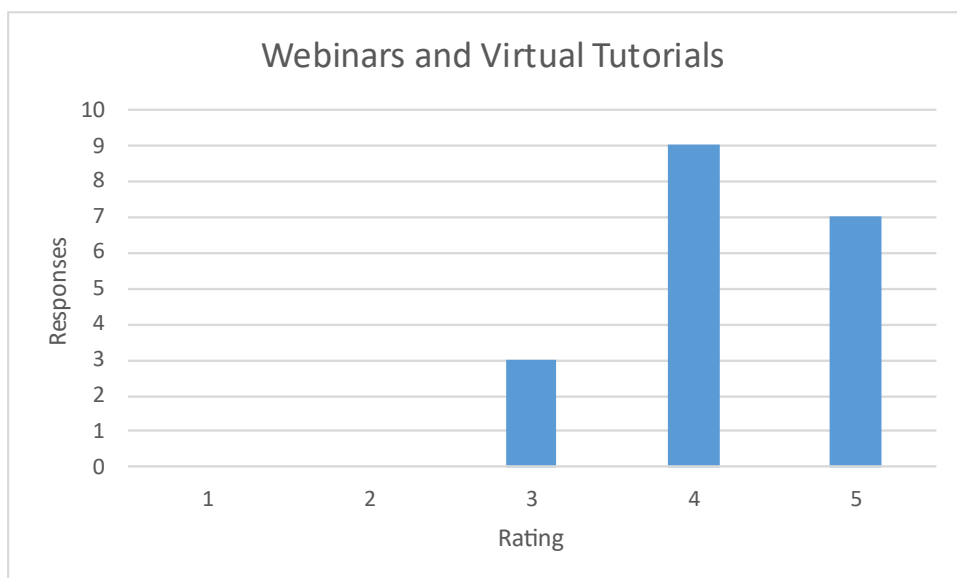


Figure 8: Distribution of scores for satisfaction with the ARCHER2 webinars and virtual tutorials (19 responses in total).

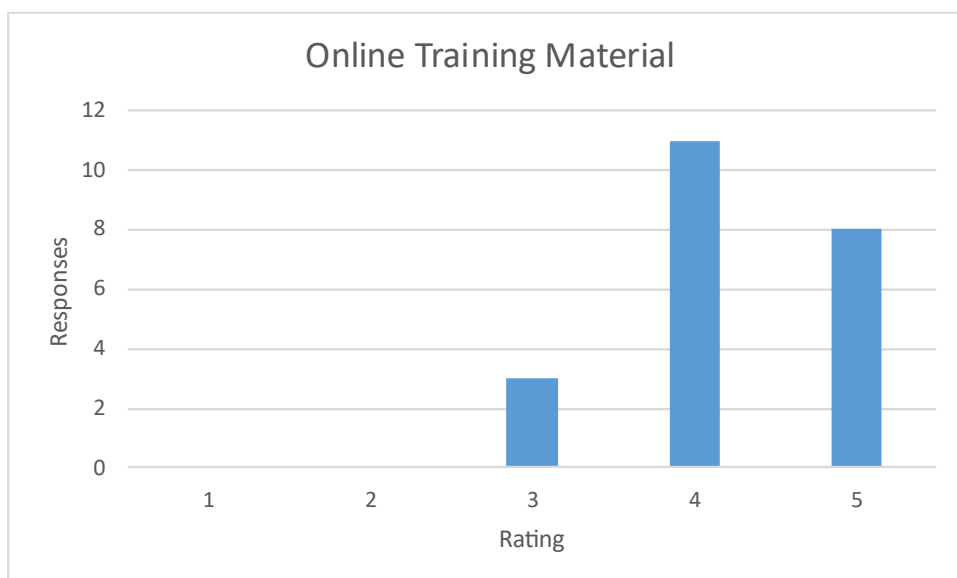


Figure 9: Distribution of scores for satisfaction with the ARCHER2 Online Training (22 responses in total).

5. List of Comments

The comments shown are all the comments received for each question in an unedited form. The number shown in brackets at the end of each comment represents the ID of the respondent.

Overall Service

- Long queueing times, even for vary small jobs (1)
- Frequent drop outs in service can become an issue, if simulations are running, but I am away so can't restart them. (7)
- Nice and very helpful service for my research! (11)
- Would be good if short free jobs could be queued up without limits (i.e. 16 job limit currently... 1000 30min jobs would help a lot with workflow and to get through idle time in the queue) (13)
- The dedication to supporting the end users is commendable. (15)
- Great service, clear feedback of issues/downtime etc. (19)
- Overall experience is good, but there are some improvements that could be made. (20)
- Occasionally long wait times on jobs (23)
- Queue quite long (25)
- Very satisfied experience using Archer2. It is now my essential platform for computation and simulation! (28)
- Apart from disruptions due to occasional work or home directories running out of space for e05, very satisfied with ARCHER2. (30)
- Good (31)
- it is a good service, I did not have issues with it (33)
- Pretty much everything so far regarding Archer2 has been great. (37)
- The service desk has always been great, and the machine is also excellent and very reliable. The pre-compiled codes are working well too (I use Quantum Espresso and CP2K). My only issue is occasionally the length of the queue, so I'm increasingly using the short 20-minute queue repeatedly when my jobs are not too heavy. (38)
- Very satisfied. Very good availability and quality of service. (39)

Hardware

- Increasing GPU hardware on archer2 would be very beneficial. (2)
- A larger, more usable GPU resource. (6)
- I/O performance variability is large and can be costly. (15)
- If possible, more hard disks are desired for data storage. (28)
- what does "hardware configuration" mean? (29)
- not sure whether this is an appropriate comment here, but with Cirrus going out of service, more GPUs on Archer2 would be great.(39)

Software

- newer rocm version for GPU nodes would be useful (3)
- Better open MPI support (e.g. for ORCA chemistry software) (5)
- No native ASE but that's ok. (13)
- There is gromacs, but not native julia support. We have installed it ourselves, but it is an overhead. (20)
- Explicit support and official documentation for conda environment management would be ideal. (22)
- Perfect compiler suites! (28)

Service Desk

- Had an issue running cp2k after an update to the default version on archer2. Reached out and was fixed very quickly! (2)
- One of the better helpdesks (13)
- Fast responses and very helpful, and understanding of user constraints and requirements. (22)
- Fast response and quickly solved problems! (28)
- Quick response time, very helpful. (37)
- always got a response quickly whenever we had queries (39)

Documentation

- It would help if the calculation of the fairshare were more transparent. I know the formula was at least tweaked to account for user usage, consortium, and account. It would be good to have a transparent account of how all of that factors in. (18)
- Lately I found it a bit confusing, especially the part related to the creation of a new account (ssh keys, etc) (38)

Website

- Would be good to have interactive/live plots for current usage rather than static png screenshots. (20)

Training

- the only course I've attended was online - I didn't have the assumed prerequisite knowledge and I got lost within 10 mins of the course starting! (29)

Webinars and Virtual Tutorials

- GPU programming using native C++ (4)
- Data analysis workshops were very handy. (6)

Online Training Material

No comments provided

Any other comments

- Extra info on queue priority would be useful. For example seeing a "priority value" or similar so that can have an idea of where in the queue a job is compared to other jobs etc. (4)
- I enjoyed the Celebration of Science event (5)
- As above, number of jobs max limit is lower than other hpcs from experience (14)
- Honestly I really appreciate all the work that you do and appreciate being able to use archer2 very much. This does not get said enough, so here is a good place to say it. (19)
- Would be great to have the ability to run more number of jobs concurrently. (21)
- I find the "User Job Report" page difficult to view (safe.eppc website) as it's a bit slow when I scroll. I also always have to readjust the time period to the most recent one, as it doesn't save it from my last visit. Additionally, it's slightly slow to update with the last jobs run. (38)