

# JISC

## JISC Conference 2007

The learners' experience of e-learning: perception and reality





## The learners' experience of e-learning: perception and reality

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### ■ Our original aims

- Investigate how learners experience and participate in learning in technology rich environments
- Make recommendations based on our findings
- Develop methodologies for eliciting the learner experience, promoting learner centred evaluations

- Discover how learners are using technology to support their learner
- Discuss how you might monitor technology use in your own institution
- Consider the implications of the Learner Experience projects for learning design



# Q1. Where did most of the action take place during last year's NUS elections?

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- A. In the bar **x** No, not this time
- B. Public meetings **x** Apparently not this time
- C. MySpace **✓** Yes, do you read the Guardian?
- D. In a committee **x** Not until they're older...

Source: Victor Keegan, Opinion, Technology Guardian, 1 June 2006

## Q2 What is the difference between a wiki and a blog?

A. wiki is a Hawaiian word  
blog is Finnish

**x** Wiki wiki is Hawaiian for 'rapidly' but blog comes from 'web log'

B. A wiki is a website used collaboratively and a blog is web log



C. A blog is can have pictures and text but a wiki can only have text

**x** No, you can add pictures to both

D. It's Hawaiian to me

**x** You aren't alone!

## Q3. How many colleges and universities are participating in Second Life?

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- A. What is Second Life? **x**
- B. thirty **x** Not even close
- C. over 90 **✓** Yes, as of 29/2/07
- D. just under 50 **x** Getting warmer

92 as of 29 Feb - From:

[http://simteach.com/wiki/index.php?title=Institutions\\_and\\_Organizations\\_in\\_SL#UNIVERSITIES.2C\\_COLLEGES\\_.26\\_SCHOOLS](http://simteach.com/wiki/index.php?title=Institutions_and_Organizations_in_SL#UNIVERSITIES.2C_COLLEGES_.26_SCHOOLS)

## Q4. What is the **second** most popular digital device in the UK?

A. radio 

B. DVD player/recorder 

C. personal computer  **No, this is No 1**

D. mobile phone

 **Yes, a WAP enabled phone**

Nielsen/NetRatings quoted from Mobile Data Association

[http://www.themda.org/PressReleases/Page\\_Press\\_PressReleases\\_Stats.a](http://www.themda.org/PressReleases/Page_Press_PressReleases_Stats.a)

## Q5. Circle the right answers

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- A. 4.4 million or billion (?)** text messages were sent in December 2006?
- B. 75% or 90% (?)** of 12 year olds own a mobile phone?
- C. Over or under 100 (?)** higher education institutions worldwide belong to the OpenCourseWare consortium?

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## Q 6: Discuss with your neighbour

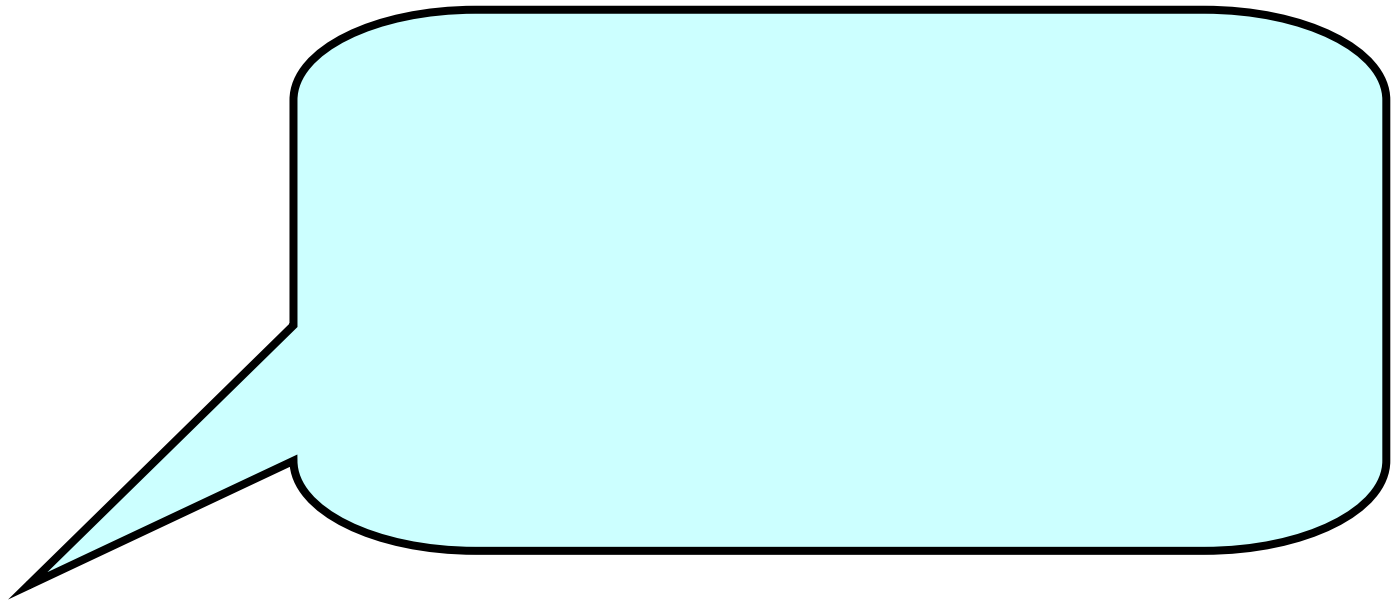
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In the next five years, how will the changing concept of time and space impact on post-16 educational institutions in the UK, **given current learner usage of technology?**

- Include in your answer reference to podcasting, mp3 players/iPods, Skype, webcams, Web 2.0 and Google.

## Main findings from LEX and Learner XP

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### **Beliefs, feelings & expectations**

Integrative, pervasive technology use

High expectations set by life outside

Sophisticated understanding of  
technology affordances

‘Underworld’ 

Emotionality

So my [group] we always text each other and say, 'oh are you coming in at this time' or 'we'll meet at this time', and so it looks on the face of it from the university website that we haven't been communicating all year but we have, it's just outside of that [discussion] board.

(Nicola, postgraduate law student)

Yeah, I write blog nearly everyday, that is when I look into these things, and I think something is important, I write it in my blog, as a notebook ...but my .. course cannot see it in fact, coz some of the things is important for me, I think it is new to me and sometimes you don't want to share everything with others.

(LXP Final Report, p 44)

### Strategies

Multiple uses of technology in multiple locations

Flexibility

Information search and retrieval



Integration with personal technologies

Strategies for collaborative work

Informal learning

- . . .they're saying use books, but books cost money so the internet is the main thing that we end up using and just trawling through all these websites, you never know if the knowledge is actually good or not, (LEX Final Report, p. 15)
- Which means if I type in genetics, and I've got stuck on something you can turn up other people's lectures and that is quite common, that you can find teaching resources from all over, from America, from all over the UK universities, that are quite specific to the topic I'm looking at ...it's too much to ask one university to provide all those teaching resources. So it's a bit of an online pool (LXP Final Report, p.22)

### What impacts on the learner experience?

Access to IT (but not IT skills)

Social networking skills 

Mismatches in expectations

Fitting it all in around life

Disability and difference

“I use it [discussion board] once or twice a week but I think because we see each other a lot and we use . . . MSN Messenger if we’re doing work quite a lot or just do text and then that way I think when you don’t use it [discussion board] as much as other people who would not text their mates or speak to them on the internet.”

(Postgraduate law student, Creanor et al., 2006b, p. 21)

### Jenny and Emma

A renewed focus on the learner in evaluations of e-learning

- Eliciting learner beliefs and intentions
  - Interview plus
  - Audio logs
- Sampling
- Ethical considerations

- The technical developments agenda
  - Personalisation
  - Ownership
  - Consistency, templates, frameworks
  
- The institutional agenda
  - Information searching, retrieval & evaluation
  - Distributed access

- The staff development agenda
  - Curriculum design
  - Skills development
  - Promoting dialogue with students
  
- The research agenda
  - Longitudinal studies
  - Purposive sampling

## Key research questions for phase 2 projects

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- How do specific groups of students experience learning with technology?
- What is the experience of highly skilled online communicators and networkers?
- How do learners experience change through their learning journey?
- What are the critical choices that learners make about when, where and how to study?
- How do learners make use of technology for learning in ways that are not expected or supported?
- How are learners personalising and adapting their tools and environments?

- Four guides:
  - Methods for evaluating the learner experience of e-learning
  - IT support and provision for e-learners
  - Developing courses and activities for e-learning
  - Recommendations for post-16 institutions on enhancing the learner experience of e-learning
- Learner voices CD-Rom
- “In their own words” publication due September 2007

- Any questions