

The Consultation

The consultation questions below relate to the report of the JISC 'Study of Environments to Support e-Learning'. This report is available from: http://www.jisc.ac.uk/uploaded_documents/e-learning_survey_2005.pdf

The questions include both general and specific questions. Respondents are requested to answer all of the general questions and any or all of the specific questions depending on their particular specialisms and interests. As a general guide a response of 4 -10 pages would be appreciated.

General Questions

In responding to this group of questions please do so from the perspective of the professional organisation that you represent. These questions relate to how the Higher and Further Education community can best be consulted about these issues.

G1. How useful is this survey to you and your organisation?
G2. Would you like to see future similar surveys?
G3. Is the survey:
G3.1 Too long or too short?
G3.2 How could it be improved?
G3.3 Are the questions appropriate?
G3.4 Who should complete the survey within an institution?
G3.5 What is the most useful aspect of the survey and why?
G3.6 What is the least useful aspect of the survey and why?
G4. Is the manner in which the data is presented helpful?
G5. In a number of areas the survey reveals a significant gap between reality and aspiration – what should be done to address this situation?
G6. What, if anything, concerns you about the findings in the report?
G7. Are there any specific areas that should be included in future surveys?

Specific Questions

The survey has five sections:

1. e-Learning development
2. e-Learning environments – current and future developments
3. Future development of processes to support e-learning
4. Virtual Learning Environments
5. Portals

Sections 1 and 3 look at processes and environments in which e-learning takes place, including managed learning environments. There are potentially many useful links within and across institutions between online learning systems and other systems, such as learning resources and administration. These sections are intended to explore how an organisation, with its partners, addresses this broader picture.

Section 2, the MLE Matrix, is a tool for exploring functionality within an institutional learning environment for both now and in the future.

Section 4 is based on VLE survey work previously undertaken by UCISA and forms part of continuing longitudinal analysis by them.

Section 5 on portal developments was included in the original survey following JISC development work in HE in this area.

Please comment on each question and provide any evidence, such as other survey work, that your organisation may have in support of your response.

<i>Section 1: E-learning development</i>
S1.1 There appears to be a move towards functional centralisation models within institutions, for example IT services, and pedagogic support. Is this a sign of development in the use of e-learning?
S1.2 In post 92 institutions is there a move towards a public/private ownership model?
S1.3 The availability of funding appears to be most significant driver overall – would you agree with this statement in general?
S1.4 More students appear to be being consulted about e-learning developments – is this true from your experience? What lessons are institutions learning from these student consultations?
S1.5 Some respondents indicated that they had plans for inter-institutional collaboration. Are institutions more willing to collaborate and have JISC and funding council initiatives had any bearing on this change?
<i>Section 2: E-learning environments – current and future developments</i>
S2. The following trends have been drawn from the responses. How would you rank these priority areas for now and in the future? What would you say are realistic timescales for achieving them across say 80% of the sector? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Online enrolment continues to grow• Institutions aspire to have a single sign-on to access resources• Increasing move towards personalised access to resources

- Continuing desire to make **course descriptions** available from a single entry point
- Many HE institutions aspire to have **module selection** online
- Overall trend to provide more **integrated student access to library and learning resources** with online support
- HE institutions aspire to **students updating personal administrative data** online
- Currently **fee paying** is predominately manual
- It has become more usual for some **systems to support a wide range of access needs** and aspirations in this area remain modest
- Staff access to **course administration** appears to be decreasing
- Largely FE interest in **student tracking** with some increase in online data collection
- **Computer aided assessment** is available but not integrated with other systems
- Institutions are generally aiming to have **assessment results** updated automatically
- The responses to **staff access to institutional management information** appear to indicate a decline in aspirations for full data access and more modest access to some information
- **PDP, e-portfolios and transcripts** are increasingly significant areas of development for institutions
- Many respondents aim to provide online updating and discussion facilities to support the **curriculum development process**
- Currently nearly half of all respondents have viewable **online schedules** and have modest aspirations to move to online personal diaries

Section 3: Future development of processes to support e-learning

S3.1 Is the apparent increase in strategies to support e-learning a reflection of funding body requirements or something else?

S3.2 Is the implementation of a VLE in an institution managed differently from the implementation of e-learning?

S3.3 There is some reported increase in the number of institutions who use an e-learning strategy to support the development of processes for e-learning but there appears to be a much higher increase in those who use a teaching and learning strategy and/or a library/learning resources strategy. Does this reflect embedding of e-learning within institutional strategies, the change in the survey question or something else?

S3.4 Strategies from professional bodies or agencies appear to be the most significant source of external information used to support institutional e-learning development. What comments do you have, particularly in relation to the reported use of national strategies?

S3.5 In terms of barriers to development in support of e-learning, lack of time scored most highly and institutional culture was in the top six. How might the latter be addressed?

Section 4: Virtual Learning Environments

S4.1 In this section, are there any particularly noteworthy trends or changes for the FE sector?
S4.2 In-house VLE and intranet developments appear to be one of the most common type of VLE in use. Does this indicate a desire within institutions for greater control and flexibility of VLEs compared with what is available from commercial vendors?
S4.3 Although there appears to be some increase in the number of staff and students using VLEs, usage is not widespread and the figures reported are quite low. However, the results also show that two thirds of modules of study being web supplemented which would seem to indicate that the 'stuff your notes into your VLE' model is prevalent and increasing. Does this apparent contradiction highlight that there is not a shared understanding of 'e-learning'?
S4.4 The needs of off campus/distant learners have been shown to be different from blended learners. However, the low numbers in the survey responses indicate a lack of awareness in institutions for these groups. What comments do you have?
S4.5 The use of mobile technologies to connect to a VLE appears quite high in post '92 institutions. What significance, if any, does this have?
<i>Section 5: Portals</i>
S5. There appears to be a significant decrease in the involvement of library/learning resource centres in the development of an institutional portal. Why is this?
Are there any other comments you would like to make?

Please send responses by the 16th December 2005 to:

Rachel Pitman
JISC Executive
University of Bristol
2nd Floor, Beacon House
Queens Road
Bristol BS8 1QU