Abstract

The Students’ Experiences and Expectations of Technology Survey (SEETS) was designed to provide USQ with an understanding of how all students are currently using the technologies they have access to in support of their learning and how they might like (intend) to use them in the future. It also investigated the differences between their use of technologies for academic purposes compared to their use in everyday life.

The survey was previously used by three universities in Sydney in 2010, Macquarie, UTS and UWS (Gosper, Mathy, McKenzie & Barline, 2011), and was broadly based on both the ECAR Survey, originally developed by EDUCAUSE (ECAR, 2008) and the Great Expectations of IT Survey (JISC, 2008) from the United Kingdom. To help determine which tools should be included in the survey reference was made to the work of The Horizon Project, a project of The New Media Consortium (http://www.nmc.org). The work of The Horizon Project recognizes that not all student, and in this case USQ students, have access to, or use the latest technologies (Kennedy, et al., 2006), it was therefore important to ensure this survey also covered the use of more traditional technologies (email, SMS, mobile phones), together with the more recent cloud based technologies.

There were twenty-five (25) different technologies covered by the survey, along with the LMS. These included: instant messaging, text message (SMS), email, collaborative/conferencing technologies, mobile phones for voice calls, mobile phones with internet access, social networking sites, virtual worlds, blogs, wikis, online multi-user computer games, web development software, and tablet computers.

Base demographics

- **N = 1181**
- 68% external/distance
- 56% Part-time
- 65% Female
- 73% Mature age
- 67% Undergraduate
- 40% In their first year
- 40% work Full-time
- 29% No paid employment

Why this research?

- The evolving opportunities technological change provides requires the frequent evolution of services and curriculum to facilitate engaged learning.
- The resources and costs involved need to be carefully weighed up against the potential benefits of new affordances.
- Important to have an evidence-based approach to inform strategy and planning.
- Understanding how and what students’ use and what their expectations of technologies for both life and study is clearly essential.
- The technologies explored here included, institutional systems (email, LMS), Web 2.0 technologies (social networking, cloud & shared spaces) and personal devices.
- This presentation provides some initial findings and reflects on some implications for emerging learning environments and meeting expectations for ‘todays’ student.

The tool and method

- **Methodology:** Mixed Methods
- Students’ Experiences and Expectations of Technology Survey (SEETS)
- It contained 127 questions, covering student’s access and use of technologies
- Plus four open-ended response questions
- Online focus groups (n=34) using Blackboard Collaborate
- Five main sections
  1. Technologies currently used in everyday life for social and work purposes.
  2. Current & preferred use of technologies for learning and communicating with the wider university.
  3. The services and support provided for learning.
  4. The technologies used to interact with the university for administrative purposes.
  5. General demographic information

Keywords: Educational technology, social technologies, administrative technologies, LMS
The computing equipment they have access to

Primary Internet access

Top 10 tools used outside study

Some interesting shifts

Technologies for learning

Develop an ePortfolio as a record of learning and experiences for professional or employment purposes

While 8.7% reported current regular use of ePortfolio for professional or employment purposes, 37.1% reported wanting to use this more often.

541 students (57%) who had selected ‘never to rarely’ moved their preference to wanting some level of engagement with this technology.
Use web conferencing or video chat (e.g. Skype, Wimba, Facetime) to join in remotely to lectures or tutorials.

- 80% (944) of students have not used web conferencing to join in with lectures or tutorials in the past.
- 65% (818) of these respondents said that they would like to in the future.
- This has significant implications as to how USQ may look to engage with this type of technology in the future.

Technologies for Admin Purposes

- 67% Twitter
- RSS feeds
- Email
- Paper-based letters or memos

Take home messages from FGs

- They are starting to use iPads more but mainly still use laptops.
- Recorded lectures provide flexibility and mobility, e.g. able to play on iPod and listen while travelling etc. Able to repeat sections. Hearing/speaking lecturer gives better 'feel' for information than reading on printed page. Other students ask questions during lecture, which can give additional information. Feel more connected to group.
- Respondents saw the USQ StudyDesk as adequate in contributing to their feeling part of a 'community of learners' and were opposed to using Facebook which they see as for personal use only.
- 'Consistency' was a main theme that has emerged both from this survey and Focus Groups. Consistency in the 'look and feel' of study desk, the quality of resources available, the staff interaction online. But not sameness.
- Strong preference for us to provide online training for technologies.