FINAL REPORT FOR THE COMMITTEE FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF LEARNING IN TEACHING

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Title of Project: **Advancement of Learning in Teaching**

Final report

The project report has been received and is attached. Five key themes were identified by the researcher:

1. Motivation for using smart devices to study
2. Accessibility and transportability
3. Technological barriers: high cost, it works on one system, but not on others, no consistency across platforms, there aren't dedicated apps
4. Forum discussion participation through mobile devices
5. Study activities during gaps in their working day

Motivation

Most students' responses fit with the idea of opportunistic or "interstitial learning", where the inherent mobility of the devices were unimportant in contrast to the convenience and time efficiency considerations.

Accessibility and transportability:

Individual students need training in using novel technology, to ensure that they not only access materials effectively, but also are able to integrate materials and get an access from a range of devices across their learning platform.

Technological barriers:

Technological barriers were noted and are being overcome; they particularly relate to incompatibility with Adobe Flash and Apple devices.

Participation:

The expected benefits of increased opportunities for student participation were not realised due to unexplained barriers to using vBulletin from mobile devices. The course forums have been changed as a consequence.

Interstitial Interaction with Academic Materials

Using interstitial learning was noted in one sub group of students. Those who work in a clinical setting such as primary healthcare and occupational health appear to have significant but short gaps in their working day for interstitial study**.**

When do you expect to run the project with students?

We have completely overhauled our Learning Content Management System to ensure greater compatibility with mobile devices. This includes conversion of forums to Moodle and webinars to Adobe Connect, both of which are iOS compatible. Students are being encouraged in a limited way to use mobile platforms to participate in, and access, course activities; however, there is an incompatibility issue between the latest version of Moodle and i-moodle and a new “app" is awaited with interest.

When do you expect to evaluate the project?

The project evaluation has been completed. Staff and programme directors have learned a considerable amount about the patterns of use for students and technological barriers. Technological barriers are rapidly being overcome and training for students to use mobile platforms more effectively will be promoted once i-moodle is compatible with the current LCMS.

Comments

Accessibility/transportability of course materials and participation in course activities are both seen as highly desirable by teaching staff and students alike. The experience both of involved teaching staff and students has been that there are a number of inadvertent technological barriers which relate to the design of operating systems and software programmes that have been outside of the control of educators and students. However, a choice of more effective devices to support accessibility through mobile platforms has been driven as a result of this project with benefits to the programme as a whole. It is intended that we will promote further debate with other academics about the value of participation through mobile devices for tertiary students being used interstitially rather than as mobile learning devices.

Signature:

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