Looking at the Usability of Learning Edge (Blackboard) Through Our Students’ Eyes
Students – 16,000 | 13,500 FTE
Staff – 1,298

University status, 2006
THE University of the Year, 2014
THE Best University Workplace, 2015
Best student experience in the North West – THE Student Experience Survey, 2016
Learning Services | edgehill.ac.uk/ls

Staff – 144
Library
Learning Technology Development
SpLD Support
Media & ICT Support
Academic Skills Support
Research Support
First VLE, WebCT – 1999
Bb CE8 & Managed Hosting – 2008
Bb Learn 9.1 – 2011
Community Engagement – 2014

2017...
Bb Learn 9.1 Q4 2015
Managed Hosting / Diamond SLA
Mosaic & Mobile Learn
Collaborate Ultra
Bb Open Ed
+ Turnitin, Panopto, Lynda.com, BOB, eShare, BOS, Qwickly...
What do I mean by UX?

‘A person's perceptions and responses that result from the use or anticipated use of a product, system or service’

Via Wikipedia
A history of UX in Learning Services

Interacting with our customers, gaining insight and trying to get to the heart of what makes for a good student experience.
A user interface is like a joke. If you have to explain it, it’s not that good.

via @SkyMacCreative
‘confusing’, ‘jumbled’ and ‘overwhelming’
‘The extent to which a product can be used ... to achieve specified goals with effectiveness, efficiency, and satisfaction in a specified context of use.’
‘Understand participants’ thoughts as they interact with a product by having them think aloud while they work’

via usability.gov
Generally happy, and confident with tasks but...

Missing content
Inconsistent file names, types & location
Information clutter
Complex navigation paths
Very pleased to have access to subject specific library resources via Learning Edge

But...

- Too much information
- Unclear labelling
- Inconsistent terminology
- Irrelevant images
- Unfamiliar services

‘My Library’ tab usability testing findings
1. Updating the Baseline framework
2. Standardising programme & module area course templates
3. De-cluttering & improving navigation on the homepage
4. Redesigning the ‘My Library’ tabs

Using the evidence to improve the student experience
Usage of ‘My Library’ tabs up by +12% in 2016/17 Term 1
82.5% agree or strongly agree that, ‘[u]sing Learning Edge has enhanced the knowledge and understanding I get from lectures, tutorials and practical sessions’

81.9% agree or strongly agree that their, ‘tutors organise ... course information in a way that is logical and easy to find’

90.2% consider the Library Tab to be quite or very important

Via 7th Student eLearning Survey (2016-17) ~ 576 responses
“Clearly organised, can find timetable, lectures and the handbook easily”

“it is very user friendly, so it is easy to find what I am looking for quickly”

“The My Library tab has made life a lot easier.”

“The journal and data bases link under 'My Library' has helped bring my assignment grades up to about 70%”

Via 7th Student eLearning Survey (2016-17) ~ 576 responses
Don’t be afraid to explore how your students use your systems...

- Identify tasks
- Turn them into scenarios
- Usability test with your students
- Capture insights
- Fix problems
- Test again, to validate
- Repeat!
Thanks for listening.
Do you have any questions / comments?
What’s your experience of UX & the VLE?