EHU Student eLearning Survey 2012/13: Highlights

Introduction

This document provides a brief overview of the 5th EHU student eLearning Survey which closed on 25th January with 633 responses. It focuses on just two strands – experience of technical issues and ownership of devices.

Key Findings

The data again confirms that the virtual teaching and learning environment provided by Learning Edge is an important feature of University life for the majority of students:

- 96.2% report that Learning Edge is important/very important to their studies
- 95.7% report that Learning Edge is important/very important for accessing lecture notes and presentations
- 79.8 agree that Learning Edge enhances the knowledge and understanding they receive from lectures, tutorials and practical sessions
- 85.2% agree that their tutors regularly update Learning Edge with course information and/or materials

The 2012/13 data consolidates the view that the number of students experiencing technical difficulties when using Learning Edge is **diminishing** (See tables and graphs in Appendix A).

While this positive trend relates to difficulties experienced by students both on and off campus, the most dramatic improvement is the **reduction of off campus technical difficulties**. This reduction is marked in the 2012/13 data.

There are some interesting **variations between faculties**. The 2012 data suggests that FoE students experience marginally more technical difficulties both on and off campus than their FAS/FoHSC counterparts whereas FAS students report fewer off campus difficulties. Interestingly, this turns on its head the 2011 data where FoE students reported the fewest technical difficulties.

Breakdown by level of study suggests that this has little or no correlation with technical difficulties on campus. However, it appears our current **first years are experiencing significantly fewer off campus technical difficulties** than years 5 and 6 and post graduate students.

While students still expect EHU to provide open access PCs for their use and 67% claim to make regular use of them, 53.5% regularly use their own laptops and **64.8% regularly use their smartphones in EHU's WIFI enabled spaces**. The **upward trend of smartphone and tablet ownership is continued** with this year's data (see table and graph in Appendix B) with 61.3% accessing Learning Edge via a mobile device. Interestingly, only 48.5% have done so via the Mobile Learn app which is designed to provide a better user experience.

It is also worth noting that 75.51% access Facebook and other social media on their mobile devices with 70.93% using them to access the Internet.

Discussion

Technical Issues

While the trends with regard to technical issues are pleasing, we have begun to investigate the reasons for the anomalies described above in order to improve the student experience. Analysis of student enquiries reported to LS Help Desks and Learning Technology Development Division should provide an insight into a range of issues. The recent LS/IT Services Technology Roadshow and Mobile Clinic also provided an opportunity to discuss common technical issues with students.

Ownership of devices

The longitudinal data collected over 4 years of the survey shows personal ownership of PCs is in decline (Appendix B) whereas laptop ownership continues to be high but static. The real growth trends are in smartphone and tablet ownership. The growth in mobile device ownership, supported by 64.8% of respondents saying they regularly use their smartphones in EHU's WIFI spaces with 61.3% accessing Learning Edge via mobile device challenges traditional notions of students seeking support for technical issues arising from their use of PCs. The snapshot provided by the survey reinforced by data from other sources (Google Analytics and Blackboard Mobile Learn Analytics) has prompted a reappraisal of how Learning Services can best support students using mobile devices and what corresponding knowledge and skills are needed by Learning Services staff.

Lindsey Martin
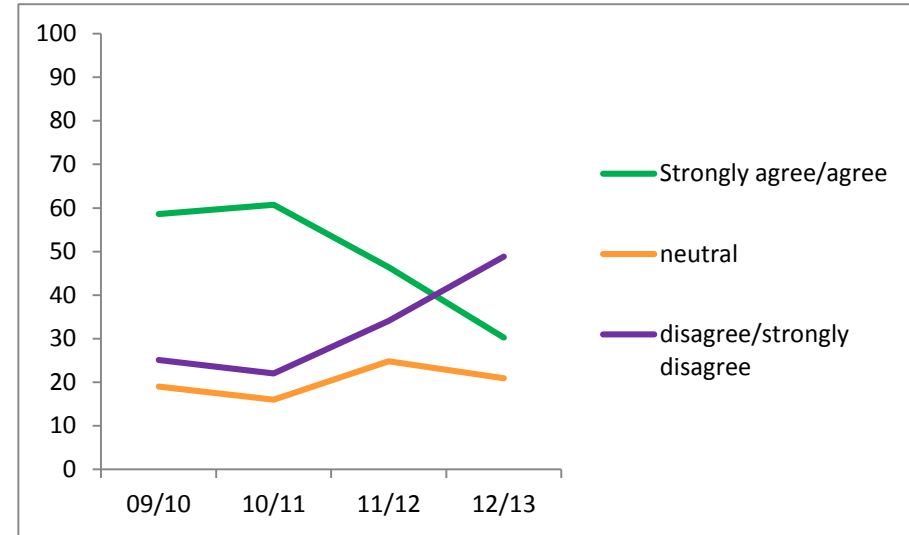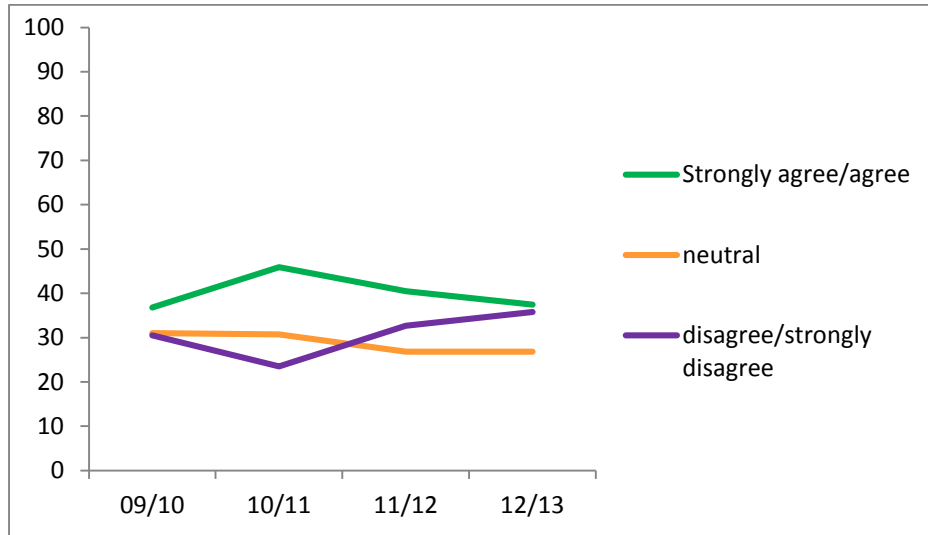Assistant Head (Learning, ICT and Media Technologies)
Learning Services
5th February 2013

Appendix A: Trends in student experience of technical difficulties on and off campus (longitudinal)

**On campus** I sometimes have technical difficulties accessing Learning Edge

Off campus I sometimes have technical difficulties accessing Learning Edge

On campus I sometimes have difficulties accessing Learning Edge	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13
Strongly agree/agree	36.8	45.9	40.5	37.6
neutral	31	30.7	26.8	27.2
disagree/strongly disagree	30.5	23.5	32.7	35.2

Of campus I sometimes have difficulties accessing Learning Edge				
Strongly agree/agree	58.6	60.7	46.4	30
neutral	19	16	24.8	20.9
disagree/strongly disagree	25.1	22	34.1	49.1

Appendix B: Q 20. Please tell us about your personal access to computers and the internet
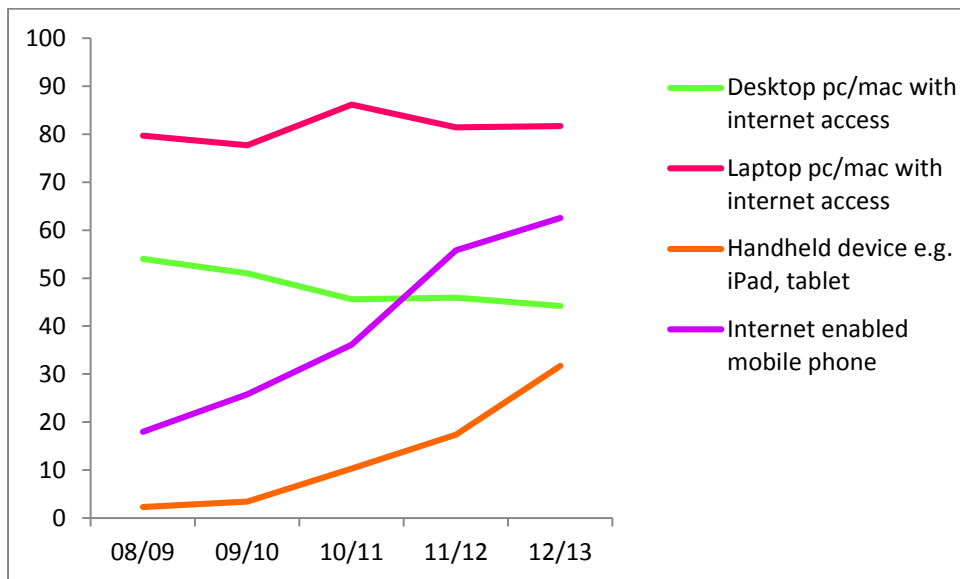
Personal access to the Internet	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13
Desktop pc/mac with internet access	54	51	45.6	45.92	44.23
Laptop pc/mac with internet access	79.7	77.7	86.17	81.44	81.67
Handheld device e.g. iPad, tablet	2.3	3.4	10.3	17.4	31.75
Internet enabled mobile phone	18	25.8	36.1	55.8	62.56