A Comparative Analysis of Student Usage of the Virtual Learning Environment Moodle in AIT in 2009 and 2011

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Demographic Information of Respondents
Total Number of Respondents
(by year)

- 2009: n = 528
- 2011: n = 730
Breakdown of Respondents
(by Year & Gender)

2009
Male, 47% (n=247)
Female, 53% (n=281)

2011
Male, 47% (n=343)
Female, 53% (n=387)

Female, 53%
(n=281)
Male, 47%
(n=247)
Respondents’ Age

- 16-23: 75.2% (n=397) in 2009, 62.2% (n=454) in 2011
- 24-35: 20.3% (n=107) in 2009, 27.7% (n=202) in 2011
- 36-50: 4% (n=21) in 2009, 9% (n=66) in 2011
- 50+: 3% in 2009, 8% in 2011
Field of Study

**2009**
- Business/Law, 29% (n=155)
- Engineering, 26% (n=136)
- Humanities, 24% (n=125)
- Science & Medical Health, 17% (n=88)
- Other, 4% (n=24)

**2011**
- Business/Law, 27% (n=200)
- Engineering, 27% (n=193)
- Humanities, 27% (n=197)
- Science & Medical Health, 13% (n=95)
- Adult Edu, 6% (n=45)
Year of Study
(note: this was recorded only for 2011)

Year 1, 34% (n=249)
Year 2, 25% (n=183)
Year 3, 22% (n=164)
Year 4, 14% (n=100)
Year 5, 5% (n=34)
Student Perceptions towards the VLE
I think systems like the VLE are useful
The VLE’s Ease of Use & Reliability, Flexible Learning, Access to Resources

- **Ease to use**: 84.7% (2009) vs 83.7% (2011)
- **Reliability**: 69.5% (2009) vs 64.5% (2011)
- **Changes the hours I can study**: 40.7% (2009) vs 45.8% (2011)
- **Gives more access to resources & learning materials**: 79.0% (2009) vs 78.6% (2011)
Digital literacy, support, access & preference

- 2009: 92.0%, 54.7%, 77.1%, 24.1%, 0%
- 2011: 90.5%, 53.2%, 82.7%, 26.0%, 10%

- I'm comfortable with using computers
- I can get adequate help & support to use the VLE
- I have adequate access to the Web outside college
- I would prefer getting material in hardcopy handouts to having it put on VLE

2009 vs. 2011 comparison:
Patterns of VLE Use
2009-2011
Proportion of Coursework with Material on VLE

Note: More course material was being put on VLE, looking at the increases in the responses for MOST (an increase of 19.1%) and ALL (6.1% increase).
“Some [lecturers] only put small bits on it. All class notes should be up. It is hard to get all notes if you play sport with the college.”

(Arts/Humanities student)
How Often Do You Use VLE?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>37.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A few times a week</td>
<td>49.9%</td>
<td>47.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a Week</td>
<td>14.9%</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once or twice per month</td>
<td>13.1%</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: a 17.3% increase of daily users
Access Notes on VLE BEFORE class

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
<td>21.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A few times a week</td>
<td>20.3%</td>
<td>19.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a Week</td>
<td>31.6%</td>
<td>31.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once/twice per month</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>19.1%</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“I think lecturers should put the notes up on Moodle in advance of lectures as we are paying ourselves for the print outs and it’s up to us to get them.

Also I think it would give us a better opportunity to learn as I personally find it very difficult to take notes while listening.” (Arts/Humanities student)
Print and bring VLE Notes to class

- Daily: 14.0% (2009), 20.1% (2011)
- A few times a week: 16.7% (2009), 20.3% (2011)
- Once a week: 27.7% (2009), 25.3% (2011)
- Once/twice per month: 20.5% (2009), 18.8% (2011)
- Never: 21.2% (2009), 15.5% (2011)
“Some lecturers don’t put up the notes until after their classes which is a pain as it’s easier to write in additional notes of you have the notes in front of you.” (Arts/Humanities student)
Access VLE Notes AFTER class

- Daily: 11.2% (2009), 16.6% (2011)
- A few times a week: 22.5% (2009), 23.8% (2011)
- Once a week: 31.6% (2009), 33.0% (2011)
- Once/twice per month: 22.2% (2009), 19.0% (2011)
- Never: 12.5% (2009), 7.5% (2011)
Note: Most students accessed VLE from home & open access labs
VLE Access Time

- 7:00 - 9:00: 5.1% (2009) - 5.3% (2011)
- 9:00 - 12:00: 18.6% (2009) - 21.6% (2011)
- 12:00 - 14:00: 23.9% (2009) - 20.3% (2011)
- 14:00 - 18:00: 32.6% (2009) - 40.9% (2011)
- 18:00 - 22:00: 44.1% (2009) - 59.9% (2011)
- 22:00 - 7:00: 6.3% (2009) - 11.0% (2011)
If you use the VLE, why?

- To Keep Track of Class Times: 2009 - 17.8%, 2011 - 71.0%
- To Get Copies of Lecture Notes: 2009 - 91.5%, 2011 - 87.7%
- To Get Other Course Material: 2009 - 56.4%, 2011 - 55.9%
- For Online Discussion: 2009 - 4.2%, 2011 - 9.9%
- For Online Quizzes: 2009 - 13.0%, 2011 - 22.0%
- To Submit Assignments: 2009 - 30.5%, 2011 - 55.3%
If you do not use the VLE, why not?

- My Lecturers Don't Use It: 48.7% (2009) vs. 41.5% (2011)
- Information on It Isn't Useful: 4.4% (2009) vs. 4.2% (2011)
- Difficult to Use: 4.0% (2009) vs. 2.9% (2011)
- Can't Access It: 4.7% (2009) vs. 4.7% (2011)
- No Access to the Web: 5.9% (2009) vs. 7.9% (2011)
“Only when some lecturers won't use it.” (Civil Engineering student)

“Sometimes system crashes in college and can’t access Moodle because it’s down.” (Business/Law student)

“No other reason than there was something wrong with my computer.” (Student in Foundation Course)

“Sometimes it does not allow access off campus for no apparent reason. Therefore I find it unreliable.” (General Nursing student)
What do you use the VLE for?

- Submitting Assignments:
  - 2009: 47.3%
  - 2011: 74.4%

- Plagiarism Detection & Turnitin:
  - 2009: 18.0%
  - 2011: 31.0%

- Online Quizzes:
  - 2009: 28.6%
  - 2011: 42.2%

- Online Discussions:
  - 2009: 18.0%
  - 2011: 25.6%

- Reading List & Recommended Websites:
  - 2009: 57.2%
  - 2011: 59.9%

- Access to Other Material:
  - 2009: 71.6%
  - 2011: 80.1%

- Lecture Notes & Handouts:
  - 2009: 91.3%
  - 2011: 95.5%

- Class Announcements:
  - 2009: 48.5%
  - 2011: 61.0%
Lecturer Usage

- My lecturers make good use of VLE: 42.0% (2009), 52.6% (2011)
- I would like my lecturers to make more use of VLE: 75.9% (2009), 73.2% (2011)
“Not enough lecturers use it. Only 1 of my 6 lecturers used it this year!” (Business/Law student)

“Most lecturers in my course don’t use it. I think it would be a great help if they did.” (Mechanical Engineering student)

“Not enough lecturers use it and when they do, they don’t use it enough.” (Arts/Humanities student)
How the VLE influences learning

- It mainly repeats what's covered in class: 42.8% (2009) vs 40.7% (2011)
- It adds to what's covered in class: 65.9% (2009) vs 65.9% (2011)
- It helps to clarify what has been covered in class: 72.9% (2009) vs 76.0% (2011)
- Using VLE makes it easier for me to learn: 67.8% (2009) vs 75.5% (2011)
- Using the VLE helps me understand how well I'm doing: 38.4% (2009) vs 49% (2011)
“Some lecturers refuse to put their notes up. This means when we are taking notes, we’re trying to listen to explanations at the same time. Very hard!” (Arts/Humanities student)
How does the VLE influence communication?

- I'm more likely to communicate with my lecturer when using the VLE: 39.8% (2009), 36.8% (2011)
- Using the VLE gives me more access to my lecturers: 0% (2009), 67.7% (2011)
- Using the VLE gives me more access to my classmates: 23.1% (2009), 25.6% (2011)
Will VLE use affect student attendance?
Getting notes on the VLE makes me less likely to go to lectures

67.4% (2009) and 69.2% (2011) disagreed
Getting notes on VLE makes me less likely to go to lectures

Note: Based on the % of disagreement to this item, most students would still go to class despite being able to access lecture notes on VLE. It’s a good sign/finding suggesting that VLE use is not likely going to result in absenteeism.
Most Important Thing to be Improved about the VLE

- More Reliable: 21.4% (2009) to 28.1% (2011)
- Easier to Use: 12.1% (2009) to 8.6% (2011)
- Better Usage by Lecturers: 59.7% (2009) to 52.9% (2011)
- More Use of Audio/Multimedia/Personal: 5.9% (2009) to 9.6% (2011)

Note: It’s quite clear that most students would like to see better lecturer usage/more lecturers use VLE
“[The VLE] is not being used to its potential.” [Science/General Nursing Student]

“I’d like to see more interactive learning on the VLE; lecturers should put more diverse types of learning tools such as story-telling.” [Arts/Humanities student]

“Moodle is essential for studying at home when it comes to exam time. It would be great if all our lecturers made proper use of it. Some have all of their material nicely organised and easy to access, others have everything jumbled up and mixed between courses.” [Computer Engineering Student]