

Incoming student surveys: big data, local responses

This exemplar is relevant to Digital Student challenges:

Engage in dialogue with students about their digital experience and empower students to effect change in their digital environment

Take a strategic, whole-institution approach to developing the student digital experience

The First Year Technology Survey was first run at the University of Glasgow in 2007 and was originally known as the Digital Natives Survey. Since then the survey has been run every two years, gathering around 2000 returns, and building a longitudinal record of students' changing access, use, perceptions and expectations. Most importantly, results are reported to the University's Learning and Teaching Committee where they are used to shape strategic and local (college-level) responses. Data from the survey is also shared with student representatives for each course as part of a new Student Voice initiative.

In 2013 for example, the institution responded to shifts in device ownership with a 'Glasgow Mobile' strategy that focuses on providing access to *'content... information and services that can be delivered via mobile platforms that are useful and helpful to students at the place and time that they need them'*. Feedback on lecture capture also led to Echo360 being installed in all teaching rooms, alongside a [Lecture Recording Policy](#) which states that *'students should, within reason, be able to access recordings of lectures to support their learning'*. Facebook groups were set up to support a College-level PALS (peer-assisted learning scheme) when the survey confirmed student preferences for interacting in this way, and twitter is now being used to support teaching in some classes, again thanks to the evidence that students are gravitating towards the service. The [e-Learning Strategy 2013-2020](#) was written in direct response to survey outcomes.

How does this meet the challenge?

- The survey is well designed and structured, carefully piloted, and consistent across years, allowing for meaningful comparisons to be made.
- Survey data is owned by the Learning and Teaching Committee and shared with student course representatives, ensuring that it is (seen to be) used to enhance the learning experience.
- The data is used at a variety of levels e.g. course, college, institutional, to inform IT investments and to support changes in policy and practice.

Find out more

- [First Year Technology Survey](#)

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