Crowd-sourcing a university strategy

This exemplar is relevant to Digital Student challenge:

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

At Liverpool Hope University, cloud technologies were used to support the creation of a new Learning, Teaching and Enhancement strategy. The aim was to conduct a 'University Conversation' about learning and teaching that would engage all stakeholders and not just a representative or expert few. As in many institutions, learning innovation and discussions about it typically took place in local 'micro-cultures', cut off from institutional quality processes and hidden from other teaching staff. Additionally at Liverpool Hope, the lack of a central learning development team made it especially difficult for student learning experiences and needs to be addressed centrally. The use of cloud computing to promote multiple conversations – local but linked – was an innovative way out of this dilemma.

The initial phase of the Conversation (Discussion 1) involved both live and cloud-based conversations among 24 groups of academic staff. Over 20,000 words were contributed in this phase. Qualitative data analysis yielded a number of themes and associated statements. Academic staff (Discussion 2) and students (Discussion 3) then engaged with the themes and statements via a network of documents on GoogleDrive. The final strategy signed off by the Learning and Teaching Committee had been authored by over 200 academic staff and had direct input from over 300 students.

**How does this meet the challenge?**

- GoogleDocs and GoogleDrive are familiar from use of Office (and similar) documents and basic file management.
- GoogleDocs became a platform for staff and students to reflect in public on their learning and teaching experiences.
- The capacity for multiple conversations meant that the richness and nuance of the local 'micro-cultures' of innovation were captured and could be linked with wider discussions about strategy and quality.

**Find out more**

- LHU Learning, Teaching and Enhancement strategy
- Paper on 'A University Conversation' in JLDHE (author Nicholas Almond, 2014)

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