

How will you customise the Jisc Student Digital Experience Tracker?

Overview

This document helps you decide how you will customise the Tracker to support the questions you need to ask at your institution. You should work through this document before you start actually editing the questions in BOS (there is a separate 'How To' guide to walk you through the editing process). How you customise the Tracker will determine how you group your students in order to compare their experiences, so it is important to get it right. You may want to share and discuss this document with other stakeholders.

There are three customisable questions in the survey: questions 9, 10 and 11. Question 11 simply allows you to add the name of your institutional VLE/LMS so learners will recognise it when they come to this question. The rest of this document focuses on questions 9 and 10.

Some general principles

You will have chosen to distribute the Tracker survey either to all students at your institution, or to a particular group (usually a large group), e.g. second year undergraduates, 'A' level students, students based at one campus or in one faculty. You may want to refer back to answers you gave about sampling on your *Tracker planning sheet*.

Questions 9 and 10 provide ways for you to organise your sample learners into smaller groups so that you can analyse and compare the results. By default we have chosen to group them by stage of study (question 9) and by faculty/school (HE) or curriculum area (FE) (question 10). We have done this because

HE and FE & Skills organisations have told us these are the ways they mainly want to compare student groups.

Dividing a sample into groups for analysis is called partitioning your data. Just as with your overall sample, responses from each group need to be representative of all the learners in that group. We know that the smaller the numbers in a population, the higher the response rate needs to be for the responses to be representative. So if you want to make reliable statements about the differences between your groups, you need a valid sample *within each group*, and a larger overall sample to be sure of achieving this.

Example: If your sample population is 2000 students, you need 322 responses to consider your respondents statistically representative of the whole group. If you split them into 5 groups – even if those groups are exactly equal sizes – you need 196 responses in each group of 400 for them to be statistically representative of that group, giving a total required response rate of $5 \times 196 = 980$ rather than just 322.

Because of this we advise you to aim for the **highest possible response rate overall**, and to divide your sample into no more than four to six groups (that is, offer **no more than six options** in response to each of questions 9 and 10). The fewer the groups, the more likely it is that any differences you find between groups are representative (real) and not just due to chance variations. If it is important for you to be able to make reliable and valid comparisons between particular groups, there is a table to help you calculate required response rates in the *Tracker planning sheet*.

Customising questions 9 and 10 to group your student sample

You have three choices with each of these questions.

1. You can choose to **leave these questions exactly as they are**. You should do this if the options make sense in your setting, if they cover all the learners you are surveying, and if learners find them easy to understand. The advantages of leaving the questions as they are is that this will make it easier to compare your results with other institutions in your sector.
2. You can **edit the answer options** to reflect how stage of study and school/faculty/curriculum area are described in your setting, or to make them better fit the group of learners you are surveying. For example: you can remove options; you can add new options; you can edit/replace some or all of the text.

Remember that you should offer no more than six options under each question. For question 10, your learners may well be studying in more than six different faculties or curriculum areas. You may have to group a number of subjects together to arrive at six or fewer options. Do this in a way that will make

sense to learners responding to the survey, and that will make sense to you when it comes to comparing groups. If you have to include more groups, then remember that a small sample size in one or more of those groups will mean that you need to treat that data very carefully. (You will still be able to draw valid conclusions about your learners as a whole, providing you have the required overall response rate).

3. You can also **substitute a completely different question** for one or both of questions 9 and 10 if it is more useful for grouping your students – for example if you have already chosen to survey only students at one stage of study, or if other issues are more important. Example substitute questions might be:

- ⤴ On which campus are you mainly based?
- ⤴ What is your main mode of study? (e.g. online, campus-based, work-based...)
- ⤴ What qualification are you mainly studying for?

We advise you to substitute a new question only if you are confident that:

- ⤴ your new question divides students into groups that are meaningful and useful for understanding their different digital experiences;
- ⤴ you can offer not more than six different answer options, for the reasons already discussed.

You cannot delete either question 9 or 10: you must decide on a meaningful way to use them.

Your decisions

Use this table to note down your preferred text for questions 9 and 10. If you are making changes to the given text, we recommend you check with learners that your wording is clear.

<p>Question 9: given text and options</p> <p>What stage are you at with your current course of study?</p> <p>(HE)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> First year (undergraduate) Mid course (undergraduate) Final year (undergraduate) Postgraduate (taught) Postgraduate (research) <p>(FE & skills)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 1 Level 2 Level 3 	<p>Question 9: your text and options</p>
<p>Question 10: given text and options</p> <p>(HE) What Faculty / School are you studying in?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arts Biomedical Sciences Engineering Health Sciences Science Social Sciences & Law 	<p>Question 10: your text and options</p>

(FE & skills) What curriculum area are you studying?

Business

Childcare

Construction

Health & Beauty

Health & Social Care

Travel & Tourism