

**Digital Skills and Research
Methods**

Terms 2

Research Report Topic:

**Impact of (VLE) Visual Learning
Environment in Institutions in the
United Kingdom**

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Introduction

Due to the coronavirus pandemic universities throughout the United Kingdom have had to adapt their delivering of lectures to the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). This report aims to carry out an in depth research on the virtual learning environment, in universities. It will give a definition and discuss the importance of virtual learning environment. A primary research will be undertaken in which questionnaires, will be given to fellow students, administrative staff and lecturers, in The University of Wales Trinity St David , who will answer these questionnaires online. A brief history of how and when this kind of learning was established will also be discussed. Finally a secondary research will also be discussed as well as the utilization of graphs and data collected from the primary research questionnaires will be focused upon and recommendations will be discussed.

An Overview Of Virtual Learning Environment

Lee (2019) explains that Virtual learning environment provide a strong infrastructure for the classroom, that allows students to get into the digital world. Virtual learning environment is the process in which students receive lectures via electronic devices, these could be in form of a laptop, desktop or a tablet. (Kanimozhi 2016) explains that Virtual learning environment includes teaching students through multi media resources such as internet video conferencing The Virtual learning environment is not limited to delivering lectures, it is also used with the administrative staff of universities to send out to students, assignments and also to give vital information to the university populace as a whole. For example giving information about assignment briefs this would be information from the examination office, which would be shared to the students and lecturer teaching the course. Asgharkia (2010) emphasizes that the use of computers has transformed lives in all aspects.

Background

Literature Review of Virtual Learning Environment

Virtual learning environment was introduced in the year 2004 (in class teaching on 15/06/2020), before this time all teaching were face to face, however there are the positive aspects of this kind of teaching and also the negative aspects.

When focusing on the positive aspects the Virtual learning environment could be seen as cost effective, because a class room to deliver lectures is not required. Wood et al (2011) explain that Virtual learning environment is becoming more popular , however it takes a while for people to get used to it. The need for lecturer or students needing to travel from home to the university is not required as the lectures are given by the lecturer from the comfort of his or her home and the students are able to receive the content of the lecture from their homes also. (Kanimozhi 2016) argues that Virtual learning environment is cost effect.

Some students that are working also able to take of time and go to a quiet part of their working environment and go for their lectures as long as they have access to internet. Students could also go aboard and still participate in the lecture. McGill and Hobbs (2008) carried out a research which included two groups of individuals the first group were instructors and the second group were students the study was based on investigating the task-technology fit of virtual learning environment using the WebCT task-technology fit. That there was no difference between the instructors and students' level of utilization of this kind of learning. This goes to show that even though people are not happy when thrown in the deep end, but eventually, after a lot of trial and error, it becomes more comfortable and bearable.

Virtual learning environment is not only limited to delivering and receiving lectures as, feedback from lecturers to students are also possible via email hence the support is also available. Information technology support is also available both for students and for lecturers when needed. Students are also able to submit their assignments, and get feedback in form of seeing the marks that they get via the virtual learning environment. A lot of useful resources are available for students to utilize for their learning also for them to do their assignment. Baker and Gossman (2013) explain that a

study carried out as regards virtual learning environment among a group of students in their sixth form demonstrated that the use of moodle produces improvement in learning and motivation to learn.

The negative aspects of Virtual learning are that most people do not like changes and find it difficult to adapt, it can be intimidating to have to access the computer or other internet devices to receive lectures or having to give a presentation on line. Wood et al (2008) carried out a study which included nurses having to utilize a new internet software, it was discovered that many of the nurses had never heard of virtual world and those who had heard of it only used it for social networking, and not for education.

The risk of students unable to access the Microsoft Team for lectures could also occur, it could take time to get in touch with the information technology support staff, thereby losing valuable teaching. The fact that technology could sometimes crash is also a possibility hence, backups are always advised. Although this is in extreme cases, it could occur, this is where technology does have its shortcomings. There is also the possibility that individuals attempting to gain access to information that they are not supposed to have access to. Barik and Karforma (2012) stress that there are many risks to using e-learning systems and among these are confidentiality and integrity violations.

Aims

The aim of carrying out this research relating to Virtual learning are as follows:

1. for one to improve one's personal and employability skills, it is very important for employees to be computer literate nowadays as, the employment market will always evolve regularly and being computer trained puts prospective employees at an advantage when employers are selecting the right candidate for a position.

2. Another aim for undertaking this research is to broaden one's horizon. Education will be seen as incomplete without an element of computer education. (Weller, 2007) agrees with this as it is stated that Virtual learning environment emerged as an important topic in education theory and practice.
3. The utmost importance that one of the aims of conducting this research is to find ways of improving virtual learning environment to make it easier and more user friendly.
4. To obtain a United Kingdom qualification

Objective

In order to achieve the above aims the following objectives were undertaken

To attend class regularly in order to obtain vital guidance and understanding.

To complete the assignment given in a timely manner

To be focused

To be computer literate

To attend tutorials

Methods

A secondary and primary research was conducted, relevant research articles were focused upon and the findings were discussed both qualitative and qualitative research findings. A literature search was undertaken, using various search engines such as the University of Wales Trinity St David online library, which had a lot of resources and articles relating to virtual environment learning.

The method utilized in carrying out the primary research was using the questionnaire in the appendix. The smart survey online research tool was utilized to collate the data below and a total of twenty people were sent this questionnaire, which included students, a lecturer and administrative member of staff eleven people responded to the A primary research on virtual learning environment a questionnaire was produced and it contained relevant questions, that involved only a population of the University of Wales Trinity St David.

Results

Various questions were included in the questionnaire and an attempt was made to make it as straight forward and simple as possible a lot of graphs and charts were derived from Microsoft Excel , in order to give a better picture of all the findings. The results of the questionnaires are discussed in depth in the appendix section.

Discussion

The results and findings derived from this primary research showed that the participants of this research were adapting to the new mode of acquiring knowledge and have being open minded as regards virtual learning environment. This shows that in the future more people will be opened to using

this method of learning and also gathering information for their various assignments. However the fact that the information technology are always happy to assist, as and when needed. It is also known that the information support team are always updating their site in order to make it easier for individuals to get valuable information continuously.

Conclusion

This research has focused on both primary and secondary research as regards virtual learning environment. It is now widely used . The research has shown that participants have had to learn new skills within a short period of time. The fact that some participants are considering to use virtual learning environment instead of face to face learning shows that people are slowly accepting this form of education. Participants have also stated that they are not left to their own device when they have problems IT support are normal around to assist. Various graphs and charts have also being used to illustrate various results of the questionnaires.

Reference

Asgharkia, A., 2010. Look at to virtual education (electronic). Month Book Soc. Sci., 24: 82-89 [Accessed on 13 August 2020]

Barik, N., Karforma, S., (2012) Risks and remedies in e-learning system *International Journal of network security and its' application (IJNSA)*, vol 4 no 1, January, 2012

Baker, J., and Gossman., P., (2013), *The Learning Impact of a virtual Learning environment students' views*. Teacher Education Advancement Network Journal (TEAN), 5 (2). pp. 19-38

(in class teaching on 15/06/2020)

Lee, B., (2019) *Virtual Learning Environments: What is their role in Contemporary Education* fe news.co.uk published 04 October 2019

Kanimozhi Virtual Learning Environment (*International Journal of Advance Research Computer Science*) Udaipur Vol 9, 155 Special Issue Feb (2018) 11 – 4

McGill., T. J. and Hobbs V.J (2008) How students and instructors using a virtual learning environment perceive the fit between technology and task. *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning* 24 (3), 191-202

Weller., M, (2007) *Virtual learning environments: using, choosing and developing your VLE* Abingdon: Routledge Cross ref, Google Scholar [Accessed on 13 August 2020]

Wood., A, Woodill.,G, (2008) *Using emergency technologies to enhance learning technologies for healthcare education and training* Sunnyvale CA: Brandon Hall Research

Wood., A., McPhee., C, (2011) Establishing a virtual learning environment: A nursing experience *scholar.goggle.co.uk* [Accessed on 15 August 2020]

A Survey Related to University of Wales St David Trinity Virtual Learning Environment

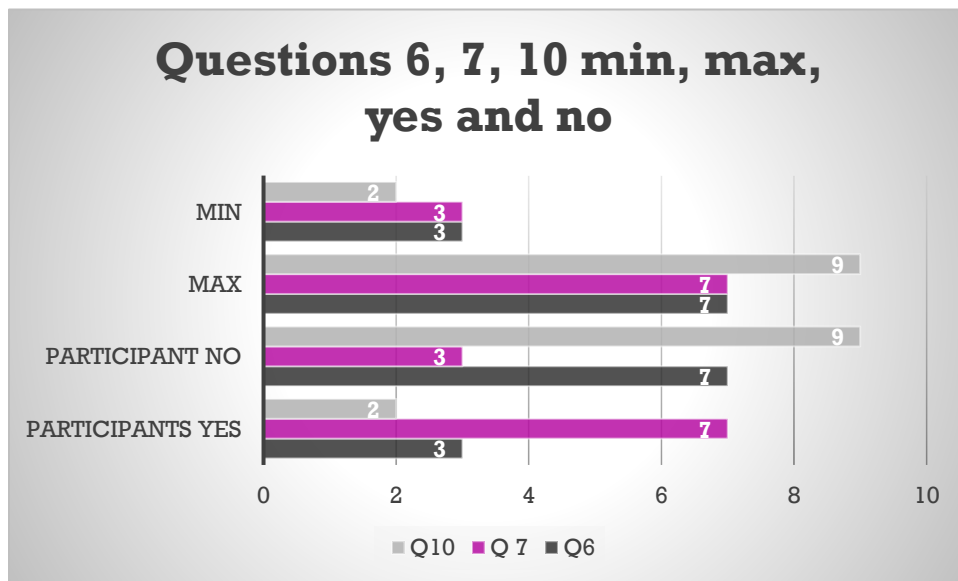
Results Analysis

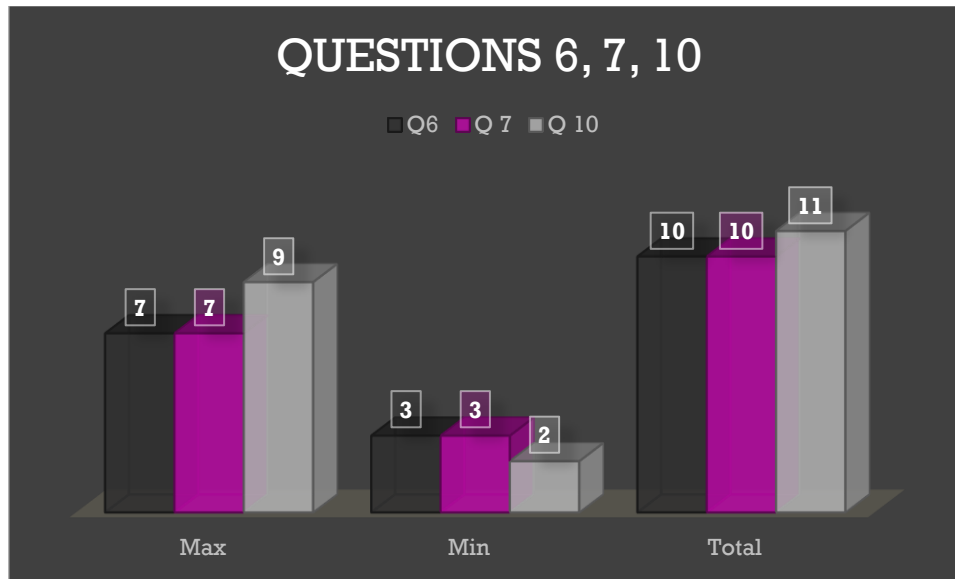
The results of questions 6, 7, and 10 have being grouped together as they are similar questions, hence easy to discuss together, I have also decided to discuss this first

Questions 6, 7, 10

Questions	Participants Yes	Participant No	Max	Min
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Q6	3	7	7	3
Q 7	7	3	7	3
Q 10	2	9	9	2



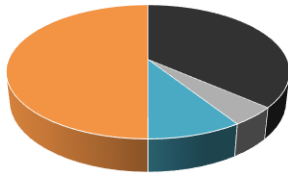


The above graphs demonstrate that question 6 which is have you used VLE has 3 people saying yes and 7 people say no. 1 participant did not respond hence the total people that responded to that question were 10. Question 7 which is would you recommend VLE to other people 7 people said yes and 3 people said no. 1 participant did not answer that question hence the number of participants that responded were 10. Question 10 which is do you prefer all lectures to continue to be conducted via VLE, 9 people answered no and 2 people answered yes. 11 participants answered that question. The graphs also show the maximum and minimum numbers of participants that answered each question.

1. How long did it take you to get used to using the Virtual Learning Environment?							Response Percent	Response Total
1	a. Immediately						72.73%	8
2	b. One week						9.09%	1
3	c. More than two weeks						18.18%	2
Analysis	Mean:	1.91	Std. Deviation:	1.56	Satisfaction Rate:	22.73	answered	11
	Variance:	2.45	Std. Error:	0.47			skipped	0

This chart below shows that 72.7% of the respondents used virtual learning environment immediately they started using it and 9% respondents said it took one week to be able to use the VLE, it took more than two weeks for 18.18% of the respondent

1. How long did it take you to use the Virtual Learning Environment? Response Total

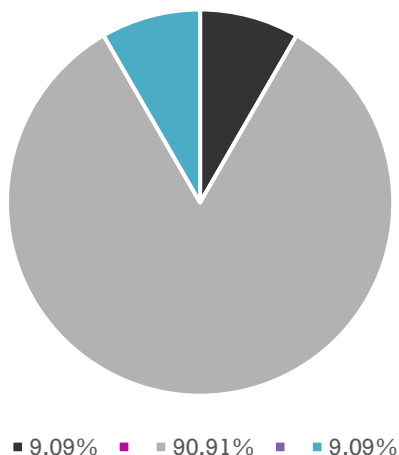


- 1 a. Immediately 72.73%
- 2 b. One week 9.09%
- 3 c. More than two weeks 18.18%
- Analysis Mean: 1.91 Std. Deviation: 1.56 Satisfaction Rate: 22.73 answered
- Analysis Variance: 2.45 Std. Error: 0.47 Satisfaction Rate: 22.73 skipped

2. What is your occupation?

							Response Percent	Response Total
1	a. Lecturer						9.09%	1
2	b. Student						90.91%	10
3	c. Administrative staff						9.09%	1
Analysis	Mean:	3.27	Std. Deviation:	0.9	Satisfaction Rate:	54.55	answered	11
	Variance:	0.81	Std. Error:	0.27			skipped	0

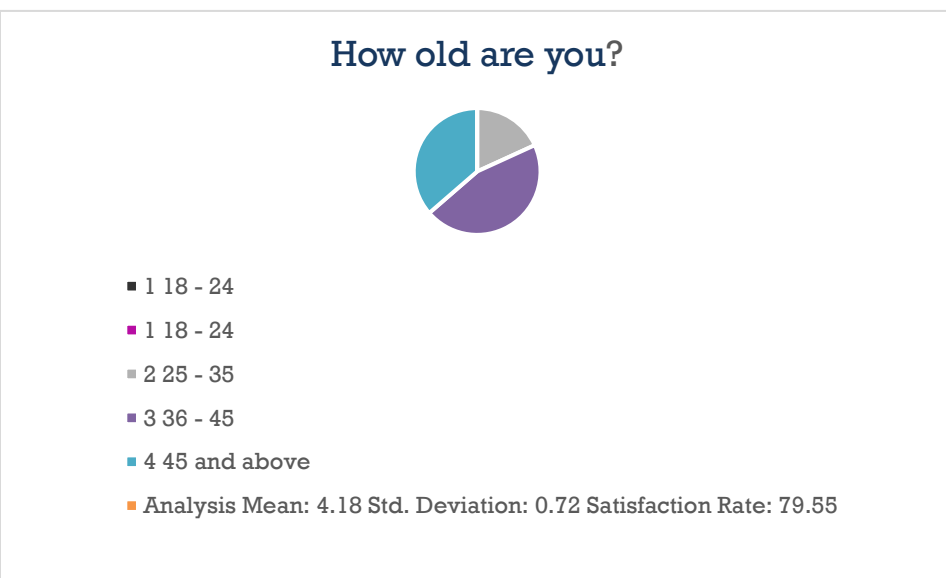
What is your Occupation?



This chart demonstrates one lecturer, one administrative staff and nine students took part in answering the questionnaire

3. How old are you?							
						Response Percent	Response Total
1	18 – 24					0.00%	0
2	25 – 35					18.18%	2
3	36 – 45					45.45%	5
4	45 and above					36.36%	4
Analysis	Mean:	4.18	Std. Deviation:	0.72	Satisfaction Rate:	79.55	answered
	Variance:	0.51	Std. Error:	0.22			skipped

This chart below shows that 45.45% of the respondents were between the age of 36 – 45 and 36.36% were 45 and above also only 18.18% were between the age of 25 -35



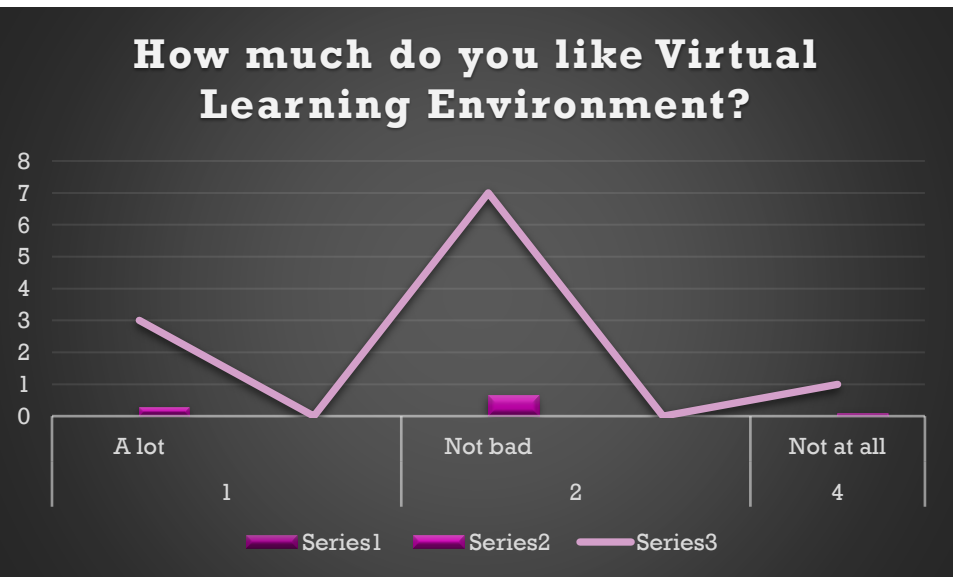
4. How long have you being using Virtual Learning Environment?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	under a year		90.91%	10
3	one year		0.00%	0

4. How long have you being using Virtual Learning Environment?								
							Response Percent	Response Total
5	more than a year						9.09%	1
Analysis	Mean:	1.36	Std. Deviation:	1.15	Satisfaction Rate:	9.09	answered	11
	Variance:	1.32	Std. Error:	0.35			skipped	0



The above chart shows that 10 respondents have used VLE for under a year and 1 respondent more than a year

5. How much do you like Virtual Learning Environment?							Response Percent	Response Total
1	A lot						27.27%	3
							0.00%	0
2	Not bad						63.64%	7
							0.00%	0
3	Not at all						9.09%	1
Analysis	Mean:	2.64	Std. Deviation:	1.15	Satisfaction Rate:	40.91	answered	11
	Variance:	1.32	Std. Error:	0.35			skipped	0



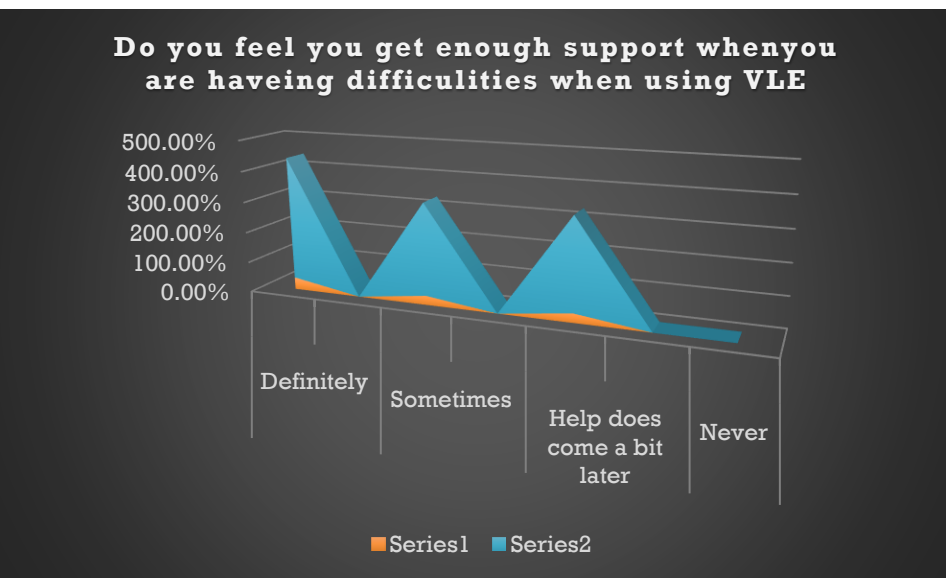
The graph above shows that 3 respondents like Virtual learning Environment a lot 7 state it is not bad and 1 states not at all

6. Have you ever used Virtual Learning before coming to University of Wales St David Trinity?								
							Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes						30.00%	3
2							0.00%	0
3	No						70.00%	7
Analys s	Mean:	2.4	Std. Deviation:	0.92	Satisfaction Rate:	70	answered	10
	Variance:	0.84	Std. Error:	0.29			skipped	1

7. Would you recommend Virtual learning environment to other people?								
							Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes						70.00%	7
2							0.00%	0
3	No						30.00%	3
Analys s	Mean:	1.6	Std. Deviation:	0.92	Satisfaction Rate:	30	answered	10
	Variance:	0.84	Std. Error:	0.29			skipped	1

8. Do you feel you get enough support when you are having difficulties when using virtual learning environment?								
							Response Percent	Response Total
1	Definitely						40.00%	4
2	Sometimes						30.00%	3
							0.00%	0
3	Help does come a bit later						30.00%	3
4	Never						0.00%	0
Analysis	Mean:	2.8	Std. Deviation:	1.66	Satisfaction Rate:	30	answered	10
	Variance:	2.76	Std. Error:	0.53			skipped	1

The graph below shows that 4 participants answered definitely the question and 3 stated sometimes also 3 participants stated that help does come a bit later no participant answered never. 1 participant did not respond

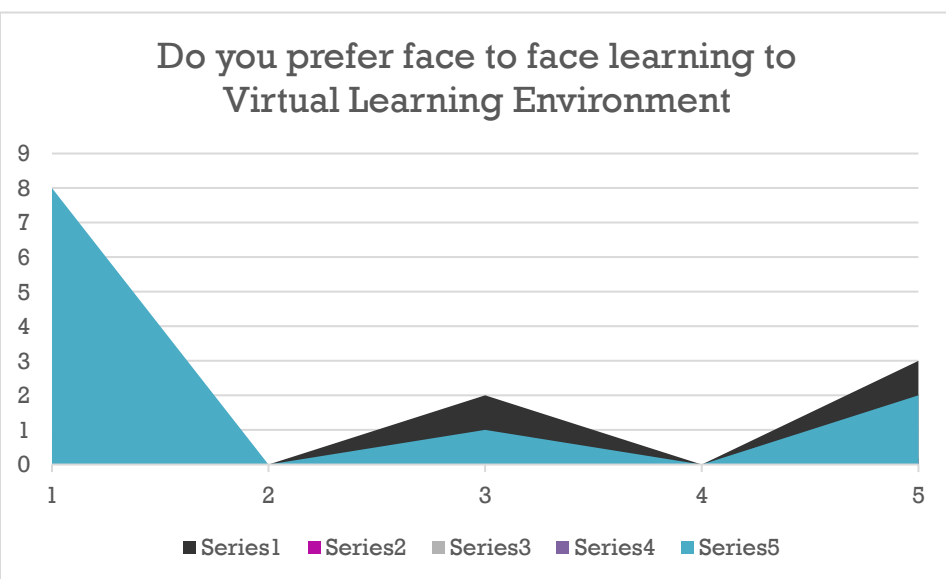


The above graph shows that 40% get help when needed, 30% sometimes and 30% state help does come a bit later.

1 participant skipped the question

9. Do you prefer face to face learning to Virtual learning environment?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes		72.73%	8
2	Not sure		9.09%	1

9. Do you prefer face to face learning to Virtual learning environment?							Response Percent	Response Total
3	No						18.18%	2
Analysis	Mean:	1.91	Std. Deviation:	1.56	Satisfaction Rate:	22.73	answered	11
	Variance:	2.45	Std. Error:	0.47			skipped	0



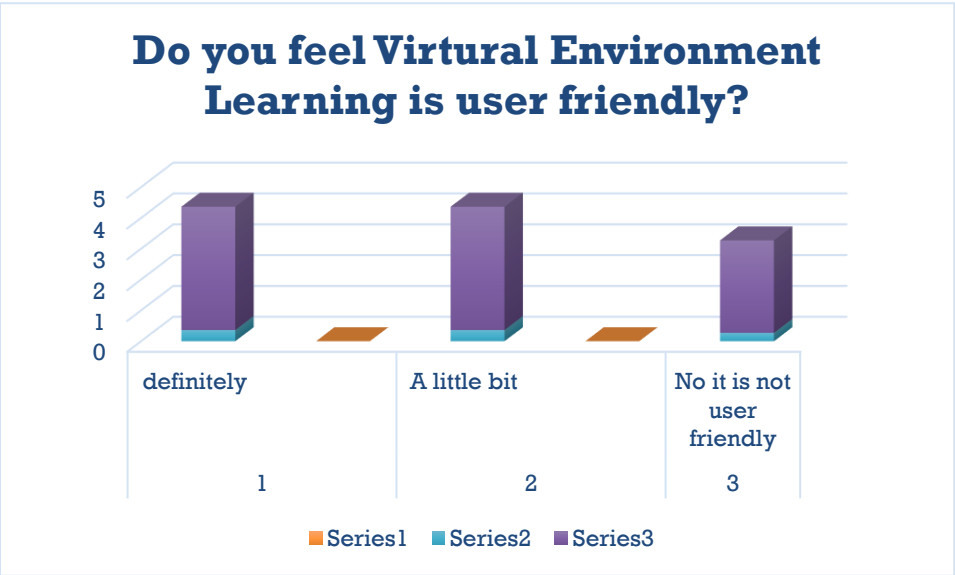
The above graph shows that 8 respondents stated yes and 1 respondent was not sure also 2 respondents stated no

10. Do you prefer all lectures to continue to be conducted via virtual environment learning?							Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes						18.18%	2

10. Do you prefer all lectures to continue to be conducted via virtual environment learning?							Response Percent	Response Total
2							0.00%	0
3	No						81.82%	9
Analysis	Mean:	2.64	Std. Deviation:	0.77	Satisfaction Rate:	81.82	answered	11
	Variance:	0.6	Std. Error:	0.23			skipped	0

11. Do you feel the Virtual learning environment is user friendly							Response Percent	Response Total
1	definitely						36.36%	4
2	A little bit						36.36%	4
3	No it is not user friendly						27.27%	3
Analysis	Mean:	2.82	Std. Deviation:	1.59	Satisfaction Rate:	45.45	answered	11
	Variance:	2.51	Std. Error:	0.48			skipped	0

The graph below shows that 4 respondents answered definitely,
Another 4 respondents answered a little bit and 3 answered no it is
Not user friendly

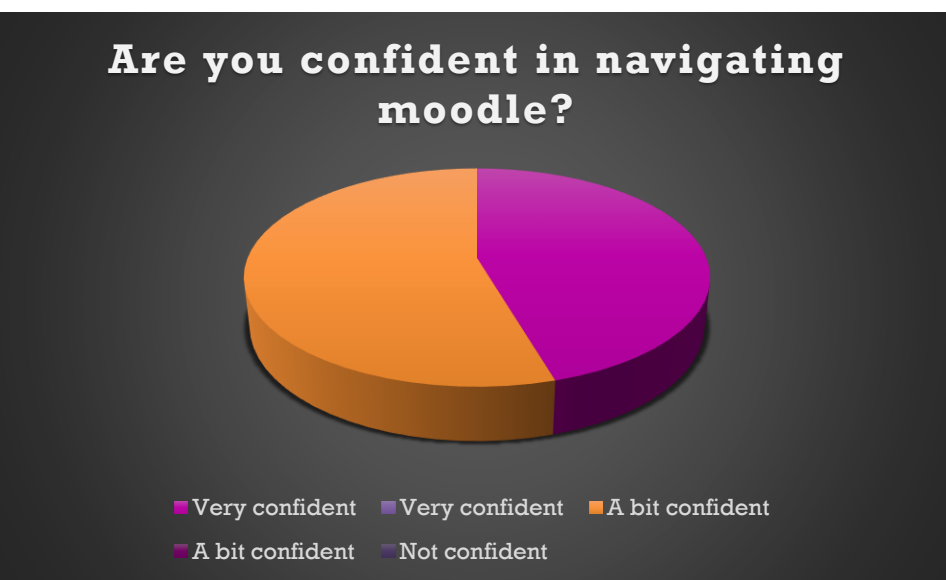


12. Are you confident in navigating moodle

			Respon se Percent	Respon se Total
1	Very confident		45.45%	5
2	A bit confident		54.55%	6
5	Not confident		0.00%	0

12. Are you confident in navigating moodle							Response Percent	Response Total
Analysis	Mean:	2.09	Std. Deviation:	1	Satisfaction Rate:	27.27	answered	11
	Variance:	0.99	Std. Error:	0.3			skipped	0

The chart below shows that 5 participants are very confident, 6 Participants are a bit confident and none of the participants stated That they were not confident

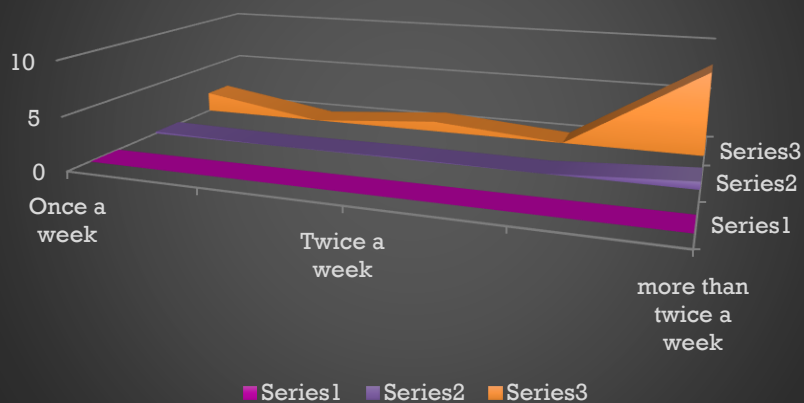


13. How often do you use Virtual environment learning a week?				Response Percent	Response Total
1	Once a week			18.18%	2

13. How often do you use Virtual environment learning a week?							
						Response Percent	Response Total
2	Twice a week					9.09%	1
3	more than twice a week					72.73%	8
Analysis	Mean:	4.09	Std. Deviation:	1.56	Satisfaction Rate:	77.27	answered
	Variance:	2.45	Std. Error:	0.47			skipped

The graph below shows that 2 respondents use VLE once a week, 1 respondent uses it twice a week and 8 respondents use it more than twice a week.

How often do you use Virtual Learning Environment a week?

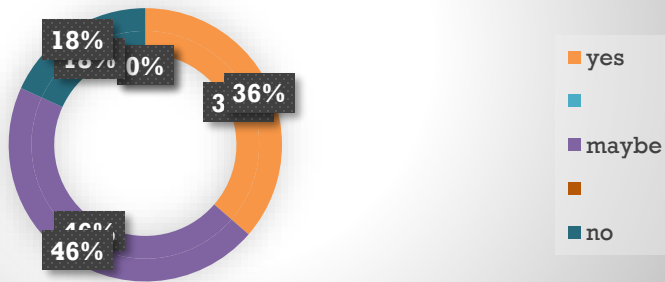


14. Is virtual learning environment a good substitute to face to face learning?

							Response Percent	Response Total
1	yes						36.36%	4
2	maybe						45.45%	5
3	no						18.18%	2
Analysis	Mean:	2.64	Std. Deviation:	1.43	Satisfaction Rate:	40.91	answered	11
	Variance:	2.05	Std. Error:	0.43			skipped	0

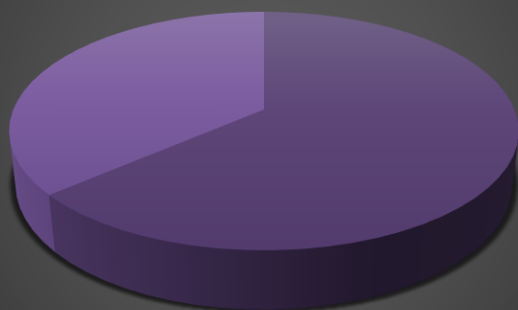
The chart below shows that 36.36% answered yes to the question, 45.45% answered maybe and 18.18% answered no to this question

Is Virtual Environment Learning a good substitute to face to face learning?



15. Are you able to get academic resources easily on the Virtual learning environment for assignment or other academic pieces?							
						Response Percent	Response Total
1	Very often					63.64%	7
3	sometimes					36.36%	4
5	never					0.00%	0
Analysis	Mean:	1.73	Std. Deviation:	0.96	Satisfaction Rate:	18.18	answered
	Variance:	0.93	Std. Error:	0.29			skipped

Are you able to get academic resources easily on the VLE for assignment or other academic pieces



Very often Very often sometimes sometimes never

The graph above shows that 7 participants answered yes to the above question and 4 answered sometimes no participant answered never

Appendix 2

A Survey Related to University of Wales St David Trinity Virtual Learning Environment

A research survey is being carried out as regards Virtual Learning Environment in the Digital Skills and Research Module I will appreciate it if you could kindly take the time to fill in this short questionnaire. Many thanks for your time

1. How long did it take you to get used to using the Virtual Learning Environment?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	a. Immediately			
2	b. One week			
3	c. More than two weeks			

1. How long did it take you to get used to using the Virtual Learning Environment?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	a. Immediately			
2	b. One week			
3	c. More than two weeks			

What is your occupation?

a	Lecturer			
	b. Student			
	c. Administrative staff			

3. How old are you?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	18 – 24			
2	25 – 35			
3	36 – 45			
4	45 and above			

4. How long have you being using Virtual Learning Environment?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	under a year			
2				
3	one year			
4				
5	more than a year			

5. How much do you like Virtual Learning Environment?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	A lot			
2				
3	Not bad			
4				
5	Not at all			

6. Have you ever used Virtual Learning before coming to University of Wales St David Trinity?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes			
2				
3	No			

7. Would you recommend Virtual learning environment to other people?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes			
2				
3	No			

8. Do you feel you get enough support when you are having difficulties when using virtual learning environment?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Definitely			
2				
3	Sometimes			
4				
5	Help does come a bit later			
6				

8. Do you feel you get enough support when you are having difficulties when using virtual learning environment?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
7	Never			

9. Do you prefer face to face learning to Virtual learning environment?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes			
2	Not sure			
3	No			

10. Do you prefer all lectures to continue to be conducted via virtual environment learning?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes			
2	No			

11. Do you feel the Virtual learning environment is user friendly				
			Response Percent	Response Total

9. Do you prefer face to face learning to Virtual learning environment?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	definitely			
2	A little bit			

12. Are you confident in navigating moodle				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Very confident			
2	A bit confident			
3	Not confident			

13. How often do you use Virtual environment learning a week?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Once a week			
2	Twice a week			

12. Are you confident in navigating moodle				
			Response Percent	Response Total
3	more than twice a week			
14. Is virtual learning environment a good substitute to face to face learning?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	yes			
2	maybe			
3	no			

15. Are you able to get academic resources easily on the Virtual learning environment for assignment or other academic pieces?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Very often			
2	sometimes			

15. Are you able to get academic resources easily on the Virtual learning environment for assignment or other academic pieces?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
3	never			

