RVC e-Learning Survey 2013

Do you think the RVC listens to you?

Every year the e-media Unit conducts a survey to gauge students’ satisfaction on a number of issues. A total of 288 students completed the June 2013 survey (thank you!) and we thought it would be useful to provide a quick summary of your responses; what you like and what you don’t, about e-learning and also an update on what the College is doing to address some of the issues you raised.

**What type of computer you use….**

Your responses indicted that the majority of student have their own Windows PC or laptop at home (76%) though Apple devices are also increasingly popular (22%). There has been a significant increase in ownership of tablets with 21% students using an iPad at home and 24% using a variety of other tablet. A further 20% of students said they were considering buying a tablet. Feedback from existing users was that tablets were a valuable learning tool. Probably because of this dependency on personal devices, the value for good personal working space with access to power and wireless was emphasised by almost all students.

When it came to College equipment, over 50% of students reported using Open Access computers on a daily basis. About 15% of students regularly borrowed library laptops, pod books and iPads. and there was a request for the option to borrow tablet devices in Hawkshead. Many students commented that they preferred to use College PCs on site and keep their own laptop at home.

With the increasing popularity of smartphones for studying on the move or for accessing related media, there were many requests for an RVC mobile app.

In response the RVC created a user-friendly app, which most of us have already downloaded. This app already provides many of the resources that we flagged as most important, such as timetables, access to Learn, Echo and news. There will be further new features over the coming year – so do feedback any requests you might have.

What you think of the RVC learning resources..

There was positive feedback relating to satisfaction with the range of learning materials the RVC provides. Predictably students rated RVC Learn, Echo 360 recordings, lecture notes and the online timetable as the most valuable resources. Also popular were online assessments and past papers, e-books, and online journals.. Some students reported that multiple log ins can prove frustrating and time consuming.

It was good to see that the new RVC Learn platform was valued by most students. Many students from older years prefer it to the previous Blackboard platform. Specific feedback included finding it user-friendly and providing easy access in one place to all the resources. The problems of finding content was mentioned and there was a request for a better search engine – this has now been added.

Generally Echo 360 was rated it is as a very useful resource. However, it didn’t prove quite so popular with vet nurses who commented that recordings are not regularly captured and there are often technical problems, such as with sound quality.

In response, the College has now installed a new Echo 360 server in the Old Lecture Theatre which will improve the quality of recording. A new Echo software upgrade will also improve the reliability and accuracy of lecture capture in future.

In the survey last year, over 70% of students said the RVC online timetable was an invaluable resource. When asked “How can we improve it?” you suggested:

* + Have your live timetable on your Learn homepage
  + Add sub-timetables to the same page
  + Change the appearance to hourly slots
  + Automatically email relevant students when changes are made
  + Be able to import it to device calendars, other than Outlook

A key development this year has been the inclusion of the course timetables on to the RVC mobile – this has not been easy. We have also tried to mirror the general curriculum timetable using Strand maps in RVC Learn to make it easier to find lecture content.

Also in the survey, over half of respondents answered that the provision of short summary recordings would help them study and revise. Last year a pilot project was started with quick e-lectures on various pre-clinical and clinical topics were added to Learn. Feedback on these existing e-lectures was very positive, with you commenting that they were a useful revision tool. Popular topics varied slightly with course and year but repeated suggestions included anatomy, neurology and endocrine.

There are now plans in place to record more quick e-lectures and you are free to email the e-media department with topic suggestions.

The popularity of other learning resources by students is very much course dependant. It has been noted that e-library online textbooks and library books are a particularly important resource for nursing students.

To improve everyone’s experience with these resources and make them more accessible, the Library and Information Support Department have updated the library search through SCOUT (which is also available through the mobile App) and also now only your RVC login is required.

Help us help you.

Student feedback is really valued so please contact the eMedia Unit if you have other suggestions.

**Louise Curtis (BVetMed Year 3) eMedia Student Volunteer**

(The full report is available is available here – link to PDF)