



Uncovering the subject blogs — Stepping stones to success



Background/Aims

We wanted to assess the usage and familiarity of our students with the subject blogs we offer. We tested this by organising focus groups for the individual faculties to see 'live' how they navigated the blog. We asked students to give feedback against set criteria to allow us to repeat the feedback process and to compare our findings for all subject blogs. Also, to avoid bias on the part of the focus group leader, individuals did not lead a focus group looking at their own subject blog. Findings were collated and fed back to the relevant subject teams so that new ideas could be incorporated in the future.

Lessons learned

Our focus groups were not representative of the student body, in one focus group we only had one attendee. Therefore we would need to run further focus groups to determine whether these results correlate with other students' behaviour. The site navigation varied considerably from the librarians' expectations—students used the blog more like a static webpage rather than an interactive blog with tags and comments pages. We need to encourage more student engagement with the subject blogs as there are a number of students who do not currently access this information.

Feedback/student participation

Students were asked to navigate their subject blog individually for 35 minutes and to give feedback against the set criteria (images, navigation, coverage, interaction, clarity). A group discussion led by the facilitator explored one or two of these topics in more detail. The elements are either decided upon by the facilitator if there was a topic which has developed a lot of interest amongst the participants or prior to the session by the subject team. The facilitator then took notes of the issues and points raised.

Evaluation/Feedback

Suggestions

- Use colours to grab attention and distinguish between topics
- Polls on student opinions about their subjects and subject resources
- Staff picture
- Book of the month
- Student column

Evaluation/Feedback -The Good

- A 'stepping stone' for help and advice, brilliant!
- Up to date and relevant
- Easy to navigate
- Good use of links
- Easy to understand
- Easy to find information fast
- Posts and pages clear and easy to understand
- Just enough detail and to the point
- Covers what I expect from LRC support
- I like the short videos and pictures accompanying the post

Questions

