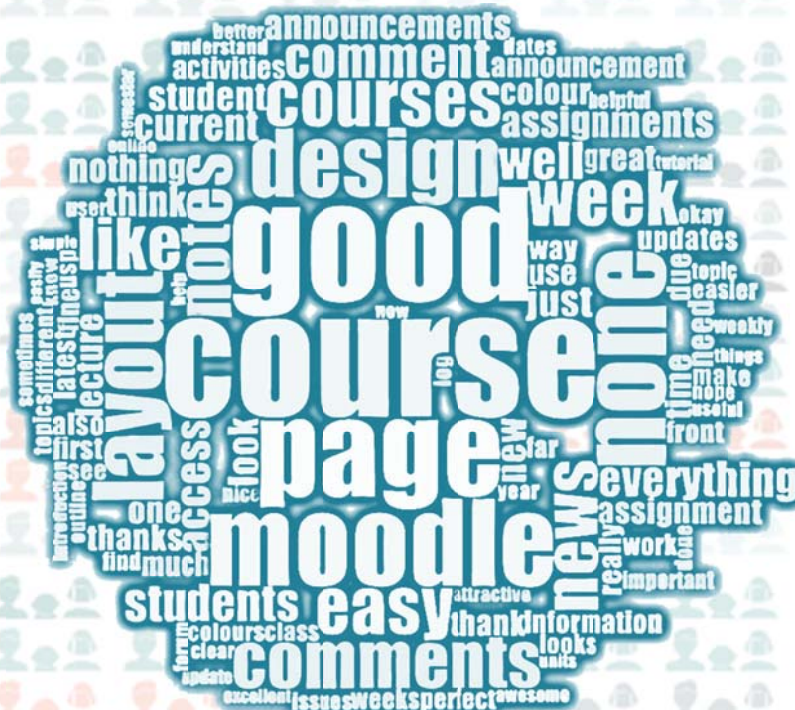


Moodle User Feedback 2015

User perspective of Moodle at The University of the South Pacific



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September 2015

Overview

This report presents the findings of the Moodle User Feedback 2015 that was conducted in March 2015, after the 2015 Moodle upgrade by the Learning Systems Team. The purpose of this survey was to get user feedback on the new Moodle design. The 2015 Moodle upgrade incorporated several improvements and suggestions from the 2014 Moodle User Feedback.

The survey period was from 1st – 31st March 2015. A feedback form was set up in Moodle and a notice placed on the Moodle homepage requesting users to give feedback. The filling of the online form was completely voluntary and open to all registered students, administrative staff and faculty.

The questionnaire was designed to capture the satisfaction level of users with the new Moodle design. An identical questionnaire to the 2014 Moodle User Feedback was used. The main areas of interest were: Moodle homepage (also known as Frontpage), My Courses page and the course pages since these are the three main pages that users access every time they log into Moodle. This report is divided into two sections. Section 1 presents the analysis of the user feedback while Section 2 outlines the key findings of this survey.

Section 1: Analysis of User Feedback

1.1 Responses Received

A total of 3745 responses were received during the survey period. There were 3729 responses (99.5%) from students and 16 responses (0.5%) from staff. 57% of the respondents were females while 43% were males.



Figure 1: Respondents by gender

Respondents were from all 14 USP Campuses, with 64% of the respondents studying at the Laucala Campus. Table 1 shows the campus breakdown of the responses received.

Campus	# of Responses	Percentage (%)
Alafua	127	3.4
Cook Islands	17	0.5
Kiribati	90	2.4
Labasa	156	4.2
Laucala	2411	64.4
Lautoka	248	6.6
Marshall Islands	17	0.5
Nauru	5	0.1
Niue	3	0.1
Solomon Islands	260	6.9
Tokelau	7	0.2
Tonga	172	4.6
Tuvalu	43	1.1
Vanuatu	189	5.0

Table 1: Breakdown of responses from USP campuses

Note: The response rates for students studying at the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Tuvalu campuses are lower than expected due to the effects of Cyclone Pam in March 2015. Cyclone Pam affected these countries between 8th to 13th March, 2015 and may have influenced the participation in the survey.

1.1.1 First time Users

36% of the respondents indicated they were using Moodle for the first time (first time users) in 2015. Figure 2 illustrates the breakdown of the respondents, according to the year of students' first use of Moodle. First time users for 2015 are highlighted in red.

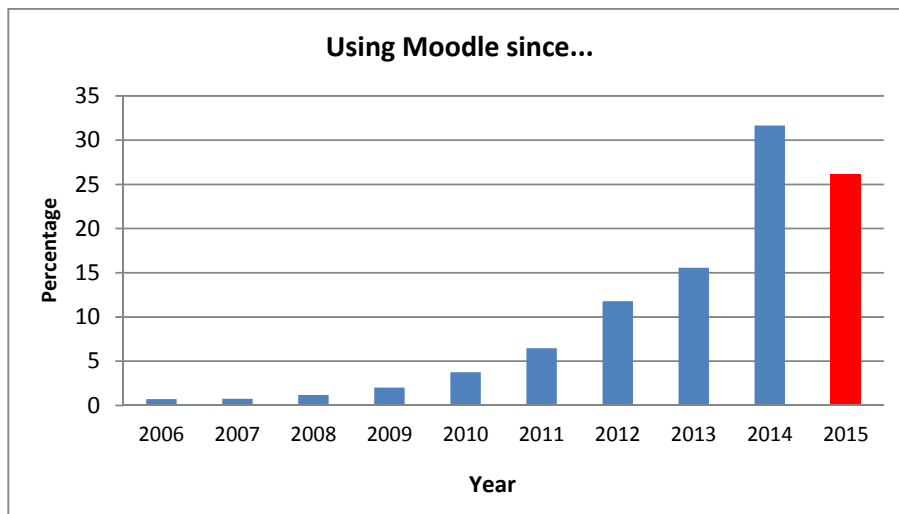


Figure 2: Respondents by year of first use of Moodle

1.2 Frequency of Log in to Moodle

Respondents were asked how often they logged into Moodle.

Based on the feedback received 81% of the respondents accessed Moodle on a daily basis, with 66% of the respondents accessing Moodle multiple times in a day.

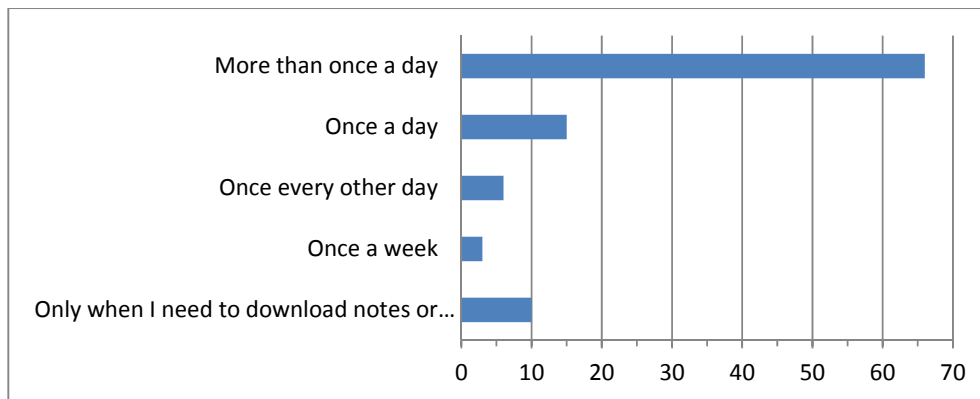


Figure 3: Login frequency of respondents

1.3 Moodle URL

Users were asked to write down the URL to access Moodle directly. Around 47% of all respondents could correctly type out the Moodle URL. Of the 980 first time Moodle user respondents, about 41% could correctly type out the Moodle URL. This implies that about half the users could access Moodle directly by typing in the Moodle URL in their web browsers while the other half use the assistance of a “landing page”, such as USP Homepage, that links to Moodle.

1.4 Overall Moodle site design

The main focus of this survey was to gather feedback on the design aspects of Moodle. The questionnaire was designed to capture feedback on the different components of Moodle: the Homepage, My Courses page and Course page. Before commenting on individual components, users were asked to provide feedback on the overall Moodle design.

1.4.1 Aesthetics

Users were asked to choose a word (from a selection of words provided) that best described the aesthetics of the overall Moodle site. Multiple descriptors (Figure 4) were provided so that views of different users could be easily captured.

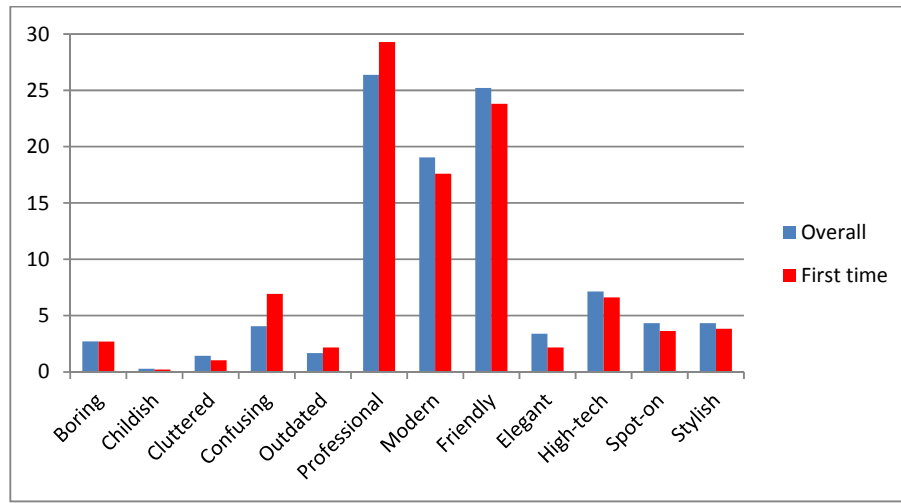


Figure 4: Overall Moodle design classification

Generally most of the respondents had a positive view of the “look and feel” of the Moodle site. A large number of the respondents chose “Professional”, “Friendly” or “Modern”. Responses between first time users and all users were similar.

The descriptors were further grouped into three categories: Poor, Good and Very Good (see Appendix 1). Under this categorisation, only 10% of the respondents considered that Moodle was aesthetically Poor, while about 74% of the respondents considered Moodle aesthetically Very Good.

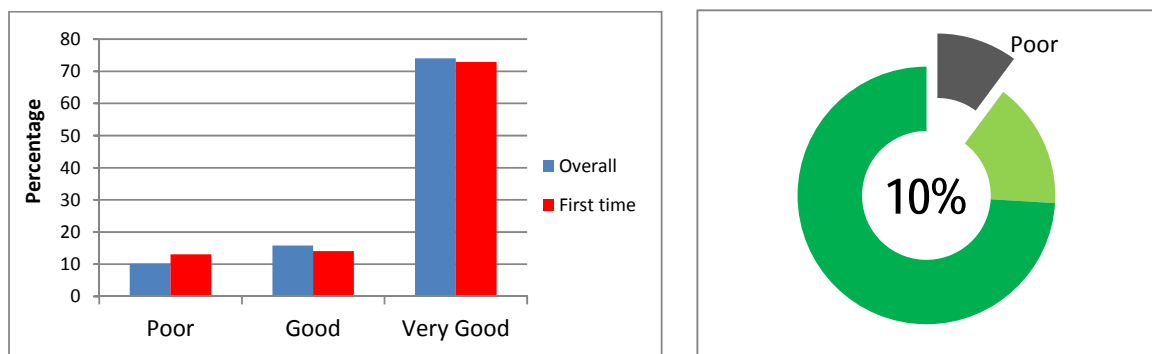


Figure 5: Categorisation of Overall Moodle

To further validate the user perception on their experiences, users were also asked to rate the look of the overall Moodle site. A Likert rating scale of 1 – 5 was used, where 1 was Poor and 5 was Very Good.

The average rating was 4.0 out of 5. Responses between first time users and all users were similar. 7% of the respondents gave low (Poor) ratings, while 70% gave a rating of 4 and above (Very Good).

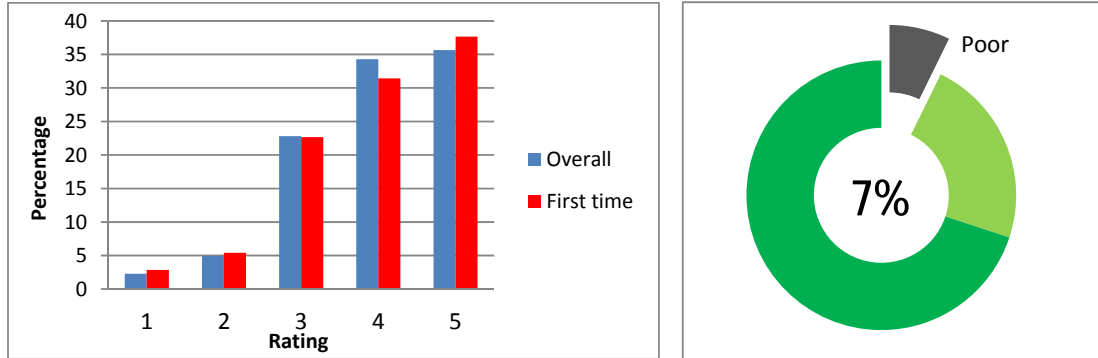


Figure 6: Rating - Overall Moodle design

1.4.2 Ease of use (Usability)

User were asked to rate the usability of the overall Moodle site. A Likert rating scale of 1 – 5 was used, where 1 was Poor and 5 was Very Good. The average rating was 4.2 out of 5.

Responses between first time users and all users were nearly identical. 7% of the respondents gave low (Poor) ratings, while 77% gave a rating of 4 and above (Very Good).

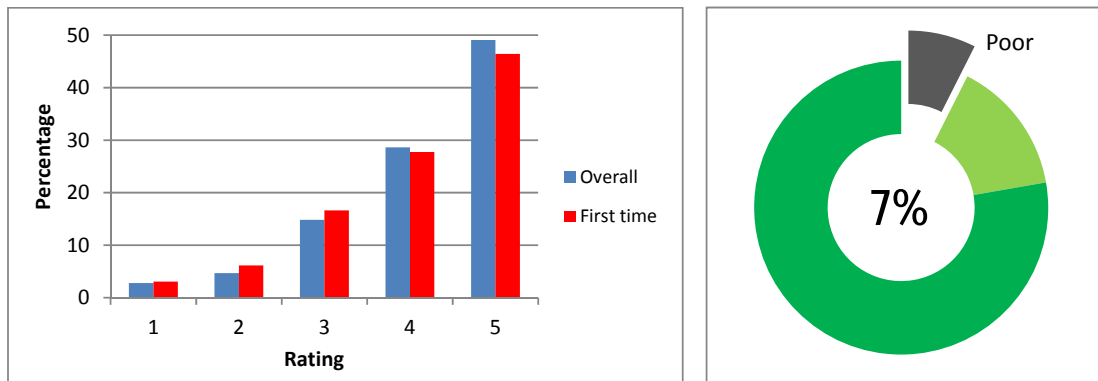


Figure 7: Rating - Overall Moodle usability

1.5 Moodle Homepage

The homepage (or Frontpage) is the first page of the USP Moodle site that users access. The questions were designed to identify if users could easily log in; and whether the homepage contained useful information for the users and the perception of the layout of the homepage.

1.5.1 Login



Logging in from the homepage was generally easy for the respondents. Most users (97%) can easily log in using the login form on the homepage.

1.5.2 Do you read the Site News?



The site news is displayed on the Moodle homepage and users see it before logging in. Seventy two percent of the respondents read the site news.

1.5.3 Comments on design/look/layout of Homepage

A total of 1823 comments¹ were received on the homepage. The comments were grouped under the following categories:

- OK (Positive comments)
- Poor (Negative comments)
- Suggestions (Comments suggesting improvements)

78% of the comments were tagged OK. These respondents were satisfied with the current design of the homepage and found it to be professional, attractive and user friendly.

5% of the comments were tagged Poor. These respondents found the homepage to be dull and needed a more attractive design. Few respondents considered that the design for 2014 was better.

7% of the comments were tagged as Suggestions. The suggestions from respondents included incorporating Pacific elements into the design of Moodle, moving the Login box to the left hand side of the page and putting inspirational quotes on the homepage to motivate students.

The remaining comments could not be tagged under the categories mentioned above.

¹ Comments such as “no comments” and “N/A” were excluded from the analysis.

1.6 My Courses Page

The My Courses Page lists the courses that the user has access to. This is usually the page that a user is redirected to after logging in.

1.6.1 Is it easy to quickly identify the courses for the current semester?



The layout of the My Courses Page is functional for the users. The majority of respondents (96%) easily identified their courses for the current semester.

1.6.2 Is it easy to access courses from the past semesters/years?



The current layout of the My Courses page allows users to easily access their previous courses. Majority of respondents (95%) were able to easily access courses from previous semesters.

1.6.3 Do you find the Faculty colour tags useful?



The faculty colour tags were considered to be useful by the majority of the respondents (94%).

1.6.4 Comments on design/look/layout of the My Courses page

A total of 1334 comments² were received. The comments were grouped under the following categories:

- OK (Positive comments)
- Poor (Negative comments)
- Suggestions (Comments suggesting improvements)

83% of the comments were tagged OK. These respondents found the current design of the My Courses page to be clear and easy to use.

2% of the comments were tagged Poor. Few respondents were confused by the layout of the My Courses page.

6% of the comments were tagged as Suggestions. One recommendation from these respondents was to include a semester heading so that it is easier to identify courses from different semesters. The other request was to ensure that students always had access to all the courses that they had taken. Courses from past semesters were missing for some respondents.

The remaining comments could not be tagged under the categories mentioned above.

² Comments such as “no comments” and “N/A” were excluded from the analysis.

1.7 Course page

The course page is a page that lists the resources and activities for a course.

1.7.1 Aesthetics

Users were asked to choose a word (from a selection of words provided) that best described the aesthetics of the course page. Multiple descriptors (Figure 8) were provided so that views of different users could be easily captured.

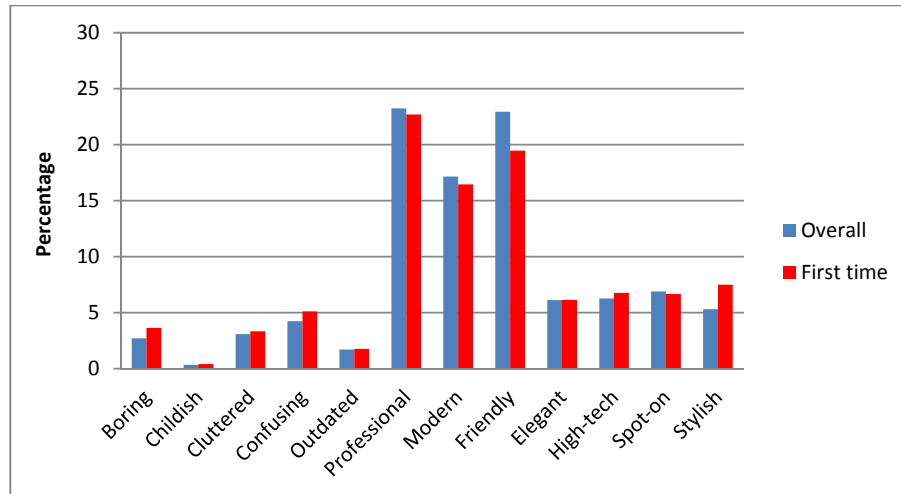


Figure 8: Course page classification

The trend for the aesthetics of the course page was similar to that of the overall Moodle site. Generally most of the respondents had a positive view of the look and feel of the course page. A large number of the respondents chose “Professional”, “Friendly” or “Modern”. Responses between first time users and all users were similar.

The descriptors were further grouped into three categories: Poor, Good and Very Good. Under this categorization, 12% of the respondents considered that the course page was aesthetically poor, while about 69% of the respondents considered that the course page was aesthetically very good.

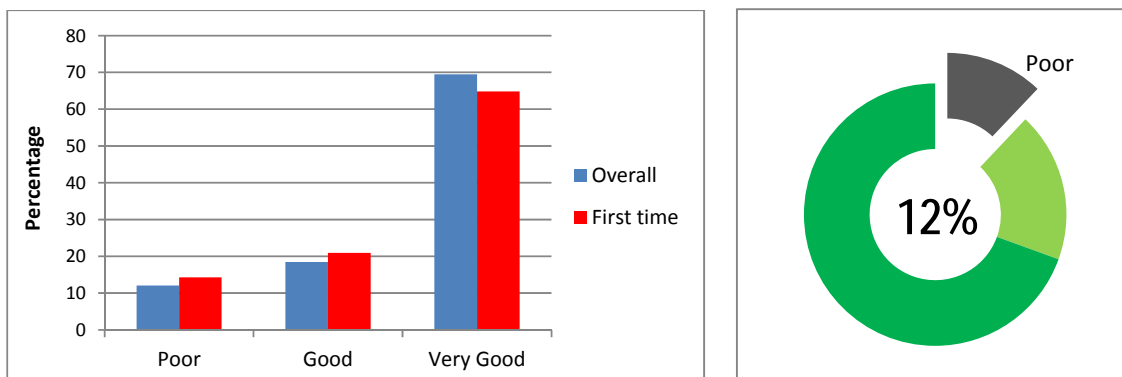


Figure 9: Categorisation of Course page

1.7.2 Aesthetics: Course page versus Overall Moodle site

It can be observed that amongst all respondents and first time users, the overall Moodle site has a slightly better appeal over the course page as shown in Figure 10 below.

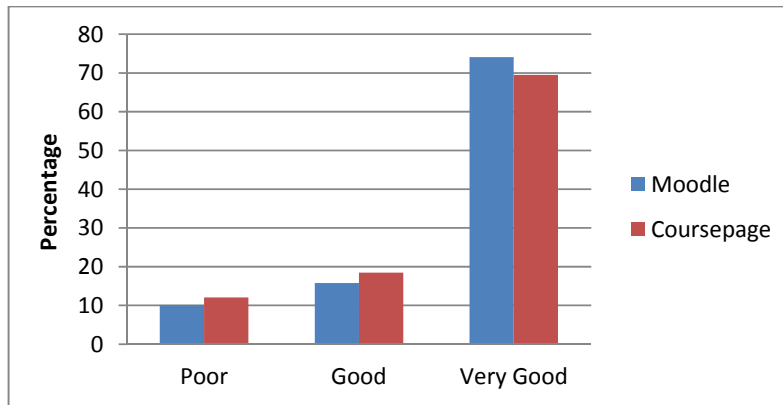


Figure 10: Comparison between Course page and overall Moodle site (All respondents)

When comparing the responses for first time users only, the variance between the course page versus the overall Moodle design is much greater. Respondents who were first time users showed much lower satisfaction rates for the course page.

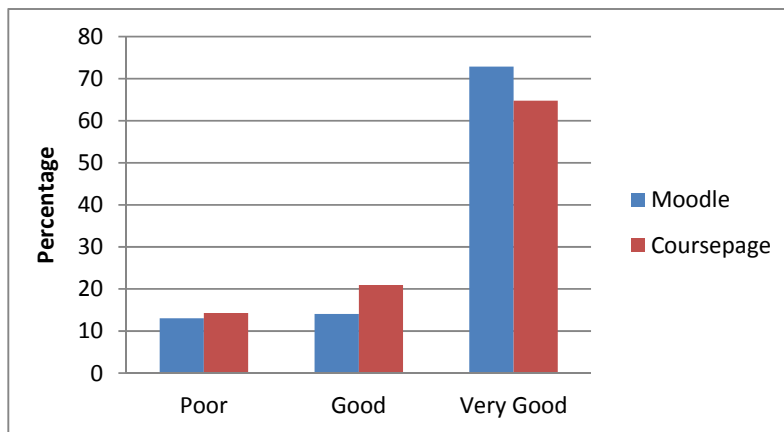


Figure 11: Comparison between Course page and overall Moodle site (First time users)

1.7.3 Easy to locate and access course information?



The majority of learners (91%) were able to locate and access course information easily.

1.7.4 Course content layout

46% of the respondents preferred the contents in course page to be arranged by weeks rather than by topics or activities.

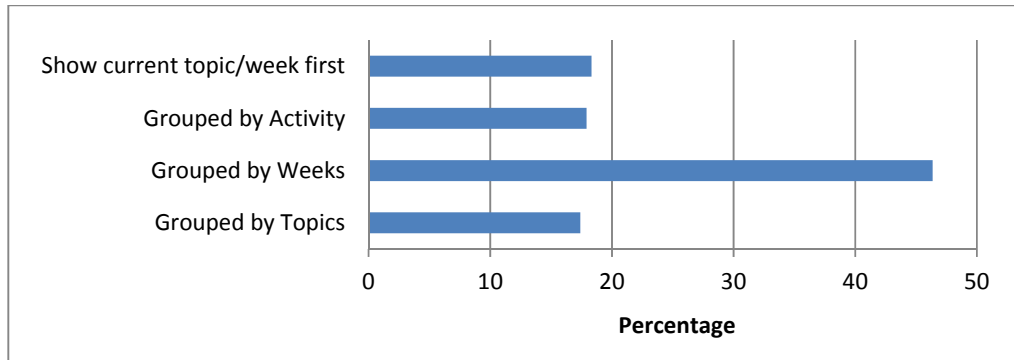


Figure 12: Course layout preference

1.7.5 Font size used in the course pages

The font size used in the course pages was considered appropriate for the majority (93%) of the respondents. For a small group of respondents (6%), the font size was too small to read.

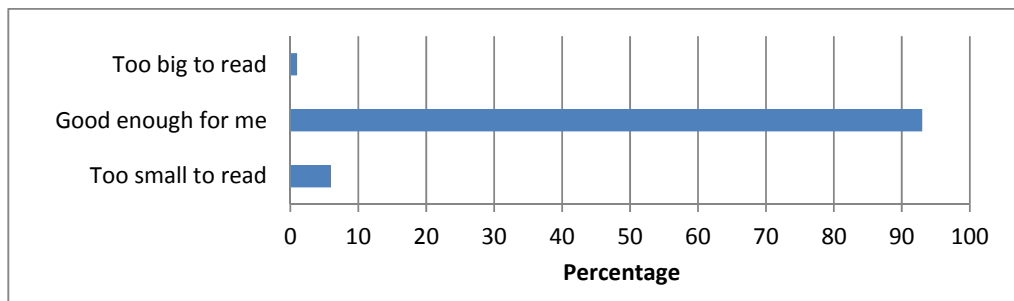


Figure 13: Font sizes used

1.7.6 First thing to view/access on course page

Users were asked to state the first thing that they wished to view when they accessed their courses on Moodle. A total of 2937 comments were received. The comments were grouped into similar thematic areas. The main areas identified from the comments are as follows:

- **News updates and notifications (44%)**
Current class announcements and notifications about the course should be clearly visible. Course updates (new/updated resources) should be easily identified.
- **Current course content/activities (32%)**
The resources and activities for the current week should be displayed first when accessing the course. Respondents complained that they have to scroll down to access the current resources in their courses. Most of the respondents preferred course contents to be arranged in weekly sections.
- **Assessment Information (10%)**
Respondents preferred that major assessment activities of the course be located centrally

on the course page. Respondents also mentioned that due dates and submission instructions should be clearly stated for each assessment task.

- **Course Introduction (6%)**

Some respondents wanted to see a brief description of the course with an introductory message from the teacher(s).

Other areas that were mentioned included: Marksheet, course outline and brief welcome message.

1.7.7 What users liked about the course page design/layout

Users were asked to state any aspect of the design/layout of the course page that they liked. A total of 1618 comments were received. The breakdown of the comments was based on the following themes:

- 16% of the comments indicated that the respondents were satisfied with the existing course page design/layout and there was no need for any changes.
- Arrangement of the course contents in weekly sections (19%) was the main aspect that respondents liked.
- 15% of the comments appreciated the creative and colourful design of the course page.
- Being able to access the course activities, resources and announcements (4%) was also mentioned in some comments.
- Usability (simplicity, easy to use and user friendly) was also mentioned in 3% of the comments.

40% of the respondents chose to give a neutral comment, neither mentioning what they liked or disliked. The remaining comments mentioned various items that were minute in nature.

1.7.8 Issues with course page design/layout

Users were asked to state any issues that they have identified with the design/layout of the course page.

A total of 1591 comments were received. 64% of the comments stated that there wasn't any issue with the course page design while 21% of the comments were varied comments. The main issues identified from the comments are as follows:

- **Cluttered/Confusing design**

Respondents found some course pages cluttered with too much information. The design of some course pages was confusing to some users, lacking proper instructions for the students. Some courses were considered crowded or "too wordy". Users sometimes had to scroll a lot to reach to the desired section of the page, hence, they suggested showing the current week's content at the top of the page.

- **Inconsistent layout**

Several comments were made about inconsistent layout across courses. The respondents stated that the arrangement of course activities and resources was different across courses. Locating assessment activities such as assignments was difficult. There was also mention of inconsistent positioning of the side blocks in courses. This caused confusion and made

accessing relevant course information difficult for the users. Respondents suggested that there should be consistency across courses.

- **Incorrect/Outdated resources and activities**

Respondents sometimes found that some resources and activities added in the course pages were incorrect. The common types of activities and resources highlighted were course outlines linking to past semester's document and incorrect dates in the assignment dropboxes.

- **Improving the coursepage design**

Some respondents wanted the course page design to be further improved, indicating that the design was dull, boring and needed to be more colourful.

1.8.1 Can you identify where the Log out option is?



Almost all users (99%) were aware of where the Log out option was located.

1.8.2 Do you log out after you are done using Moodle?

Most users (70%) logged out all the time when they finished using Moodle.

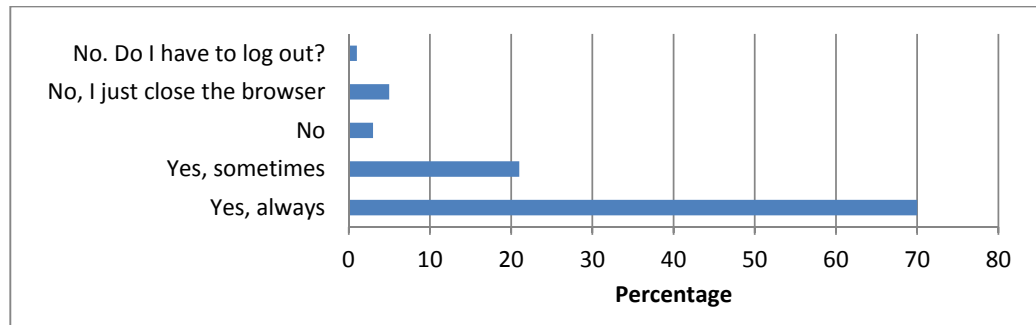


Figure 14: User Logout habit

1.8.3 Can you identify where the Help and User Guide page is?



The majority of learners (80%) indicated they knew the location of the user guides. However, access to the user guide pages need to be further improved as indicated by 20% of the respondents.

1.8.4 Have you used the Help and User Guide?

Users were asked whether they had used the Help and User Guide available for Moodle.

Half the respondents claimed they had not used the user guide, while 45% of the respondents said they found the user guide useful to them. For those who have used the user guide, most of them (90%) found it to be useful.

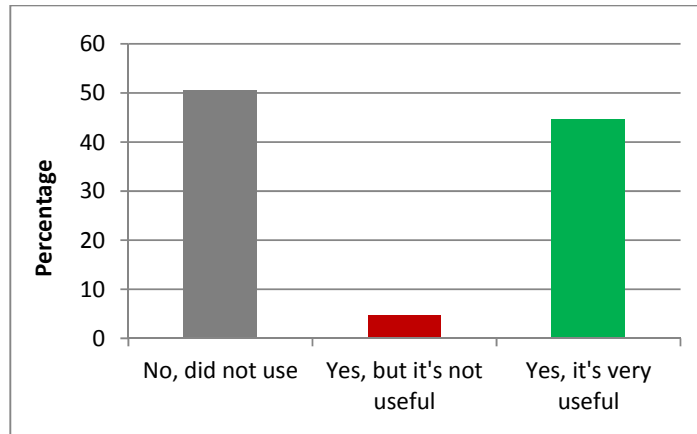


Figure 15: User guide usage

1.8.5 Is the Quick Links section on the homepage useful for you?



The Quick Links section is useful for most of the users (95%). This was added based on the suggestions made by the users in the 2014 Moodle User feedback.

1.8.6 Interested in taking a free online course to learn about Moodle?



A large number of respondents (74%) showed an interest in taking an online course to learn more about Moodle and other components of USP's Learning Systems platform.

1.8.7 Overall comments on Moodle in general

A total of 869 comments³ were received. The comments were grouped under the following categories:

- OK (Positive comments)
- Issues (Problems faced)
- Suggestions (Comments suggesting improvements)
- Help (Help/ Training needed)

³ Comments such as "no comments" and "N/A" were excluded from the analysis.

66% of the comments were tagged OK. These respondents were satisfied with the design of Moodle and said Moodle played a vital part in their learning activities at USP. Several respondents showed their appreciation for the efforts made to improve Moodle's service for the learners.

7% of the comments were tagged Issues. Two main issues were raised. The first issue was on poor connectivity when accessing Moodle from some USP campuses, especially Solomon Islands campus. The other issue was regarding *TurnItIn*. Several students had difficulty in viewing/opening the *TurnItIn* Similarity Report.

4% of the comments were tagged as Suggestions. The suggestions included having consistent course pages so that it is easy for the students to locate the desired information in their courses, using a design for Moodle that has a Pacific feel to it and improving Moodle access on smartphones.

6% of the comments were tagged as Help. Some respondents stated that they were interested in the online course to learn about Moodle, and would be willing to take the course provided that it was free. Some respondents also mentioned that they needed more help so that they can become familiar with certain features of Moodle.

The remaining comments could not be tagged under the categories mentioned above.

Section 2: Important Findings

The findings of the 2015 Moodle User Feedback are similar to that of 2014. While there are a significantly larger number of responses received, (747 participants in 2014 and 3745 participants in 2015) similar percentage of male and female respondents filled in the questionnaire. Overall, the feedback analysis show the trend for 2015 is largely comparable to 2014's findings.

The findings for 2015 shows improved user satisfaction rates in most areas. A better satisfaction rates amongst the users can be attributed to the design improvements that were part of the 2015 Moodle upgrade that was done in January 2015. Several items identified as part of the 2014 Moodle User Feedback were incorporated in the 2015 Moodle design.

- The improved aesthetics were a direct result of several style improvements that was done.
- More users are now reading the Moodle site news and users are not complaining that the site news items are irrelevant to them.
- The addition of the Quick Links section on the homepage is greatly appreciated by the users.
- The Upcoming Events and calendar blocks are keeping users informed about relevant USP events.
- Removing the extra Login box from the homepage has received mixed reactions. Some users were disappointed that their preferred login option got removed. However, users are easily able to log in to Moodle as shown in Section 1.5.1. It is hoped that all users will accept the new login option in time to come.

Here are some issues highlighted from the analysis of the user comments:

- Users are not aware of Moodle URL. More awareness on how to directly access Moodle via the URL is necessary so that users can access Moodle quickly, without relying on a "landing page".
- Students prefer to have access to all the courses that they have taken while they are undertaking their studies.
- Students prefer content in the course pages to be arranged in weekly sections, with the current week's section shown first. A lot of users said that it was inconvenient to always having to scroll the page to get to the desired section.
- Students prefer a consistent layout across courses. The course page structure, arrangement of the content and the side blocks should be standardised. This will aid students to quickly access the information that they need.
- Students also complained that some course pages were cluttered, with too many things added on the course page. This made the course page very long, and difficult to identify required information. In some cases, students failed to see important information due to the crowded course page.
- Several users welcomed the idea of an online course to learn about Moodle and other components of USP's Learning Systems platform. The Student User guide was a useful resource for users who utilised it. The guide and an online training course can play a vital role in improving the students' skills in using USP's Learning Systems platform.
- Few students requested to access Moodle on their smartphones. Since computers are still limited in the campuses, smartphones are more common option. Students find it more convenient to use their smartphones to access Moodle.

Summary

The Moodle User Feedback 2015 at The University of the South Pacific provides useful information on the learner's perspective on the university's Moodle platform. The findings of this survey will help the Learning Systems Team in refining the design of the Moodle platform for the contextual setting that it serves.

In the inaugural survey of 2014, a total of 747 users filled in the survey from 13 campuses. In the 2015 survey, 3745 students and staff completed the survey. We are encouraged by the interest that learners have in the design of the learning management system that they use. The two surveys provide valuable student feedback for course designers and all teaching staff.

The 2015 Moodle User Feedback reaffirms the positive response of learners from 2014 and encourages further adaptive development of the system to accommodate the changing needs of the region. The Moodle User Feedback has already resulted in improved user satisfaction rates.

In conclusion, we want to thank the students and staff of USP in taking their time and interest in responding to the surveys and in enabling the creation of a platform that is conducive to teaching and learning.

Appendix 1

Grouping into categories – words:

Category	Word
Poor	Boring
	Childish
	Cluttered
	Confusing
	Outdated
Very Good	Professional
	Modern
	Friendly
	Elegant
Good	High-tech
	Spot-on
	Stylish

Grouping into categories – ratings:

Category	Rating
Poor	1
	2
Good	3
Very Good	4
	5

