

# Moodle User Feedback 2014

User perspective of Moodle at The University of the South Pacific

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# Overview

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This report presents the findings of the Moodle User Feedback 2014 that was conducted in October 2014, as the Learning Systems Team was preparing for the 2015 Moodle upgrade. The purpose of this survey was to get user feedback on the Moodle design and identify areas of improvements that can be incorporated into the Moodle design for 2015. This is the first study of learners' perspectives of the learning management system at the University of the South Pacific.

The survey period was from 1<sup>st</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> October 2014. 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 both the students, administrative staff and faculty.

The questionnaire was designed to capture the satisfaction level of users with the existing Moodle design. The main areas of interest were: Moodle homepage (also known as FrontPage), My Courses pages 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 collected. Section 2 states some of the major design ideas incorporated into the Moodle design for 2015 that were a direct result of the analysis of the user feedback presented in Section 1 of this report.

# Section 1: Analysis of User Feedback

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## 1.1 Responses Received

A total of 747 responses were received during the survey period. There were 728 responses (98%) from students and 19 responses (2%) from staff. 55% of the respondents were females while 45% were males.



Figure 1: Respondents by gender

Respondents were from 13 out of the 14 USP Campuses, with 60% of the respondents studying at the Laucala Campus. The table given below shows the campus breakdown of the responses received.

Campus	# of Responses	Percentage (%)
Alafua	25	3.3
Cook Islands	3	0.4
Kiribati	9	1.2
Labasa (Fiji)	34	4.6
Laucala (Fiji)	454	60.8
Lautoka (Fiji)	43	5.8
Marshall Islands	4	0.5
Nauru	1	0.1
Solomon Islands	66	8.8
Tokelau	1	0.1
Tonga	26	3.5
Tuvalu	2	0.3
Vanuatu	60	8.0

Table 1: Breakdown of responses from USP campuses

From Semester 2, 2012, USP moved to the Moodle 2 platform from Moodle 1.9<sup>1</sup>. According to the responses received, over 70% of the respondents utilized Moodle after 2012. This meant that these users have only used USP's current Moodle platform.

### 1.1.1 First time Users

33% of the respondents indicated they were using Moodle for the first time (first time users) in 2014. Figure 2 illustrates the breakdown of the respondents, according to the year of students' first use of Moodle. First time users for 2014 are highlighted in red.

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<sup>1</sup> Moodle 1.9 was the old Moodle platform, and used until 2012. It had a significantly different look to the current (Moodle v2) Moodle platform.

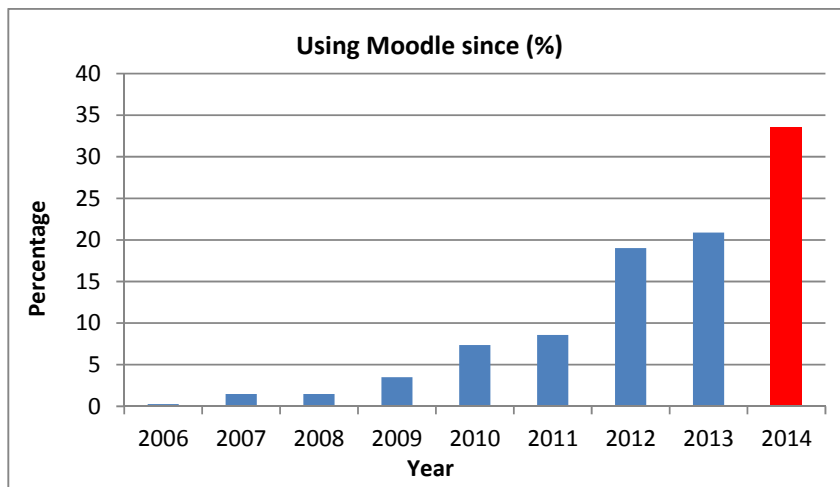


Figure 2: Respondents by year of first use of Moodle

## 1.2 Frequency of Log in to Moodle

Respondents were asked how often they logged into Moodle.

Based on the feedback received 79% of the respondents accessed Moodle on a daily basis, with 66% of the respondents accessing Moodle multiple times in a day.

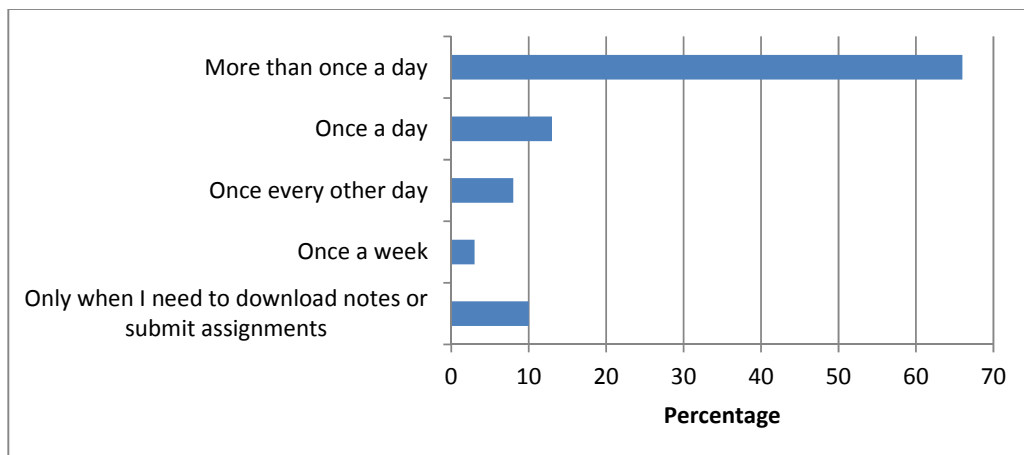


Figure 3: Login frequency of respondents

## 1.3 Moodle URL

Users were asked to write down the URL to access Moodle directly. Just over 50% of all respondents could correctly type out the Moodle URL. Of the 251 first time Moodle user respondents, about 48% 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 needed a “landing page” that is linked 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.

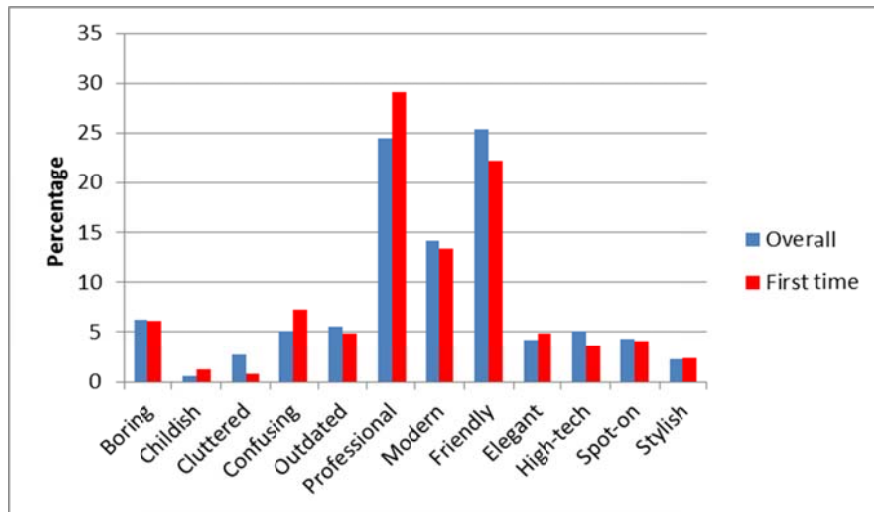


Figure 4: Overall Moodle design classification

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, 20% of the respondents considered that Moodle was aesthetically poor, while about 68% of the respondents considered that Moodle was aesthetically very good.

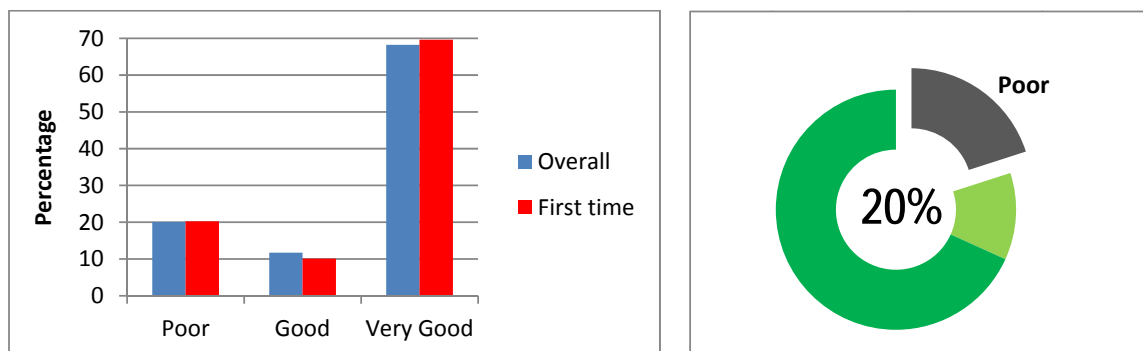


Figure 5: Categorisation of Overall Moodle

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

The average rating was 3.6 out of 5. Responses between first time users and all users were similar. 14% of the respondents gave low (Poor) ratings, while 58% gave a rating of 4 and above (Very Good).

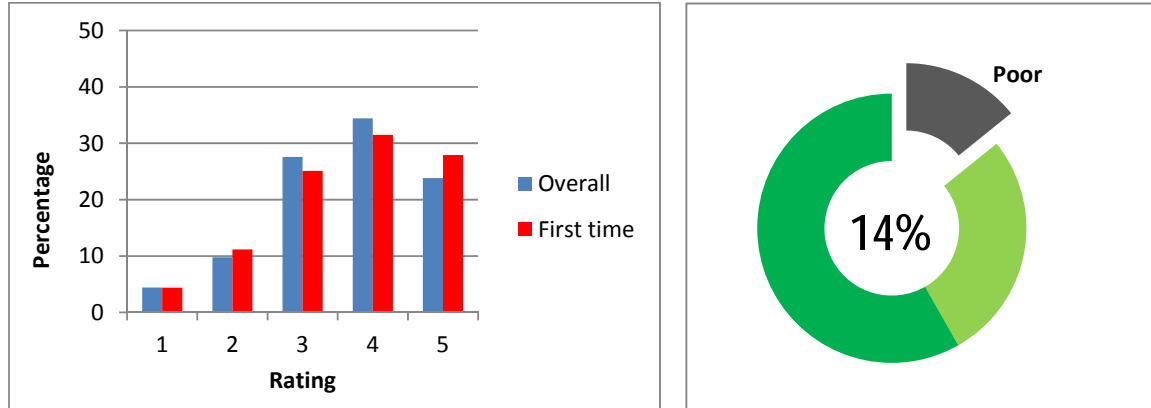


Figure 6: Rating - Overall Moodle design

### 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 Good. The average rating was 4 out of 5.

Responses between first time users and all users were almost identical. 10% of the respondents gave low (Poor) ratings, while 73% gave a rating of 4 and above (Very Good).

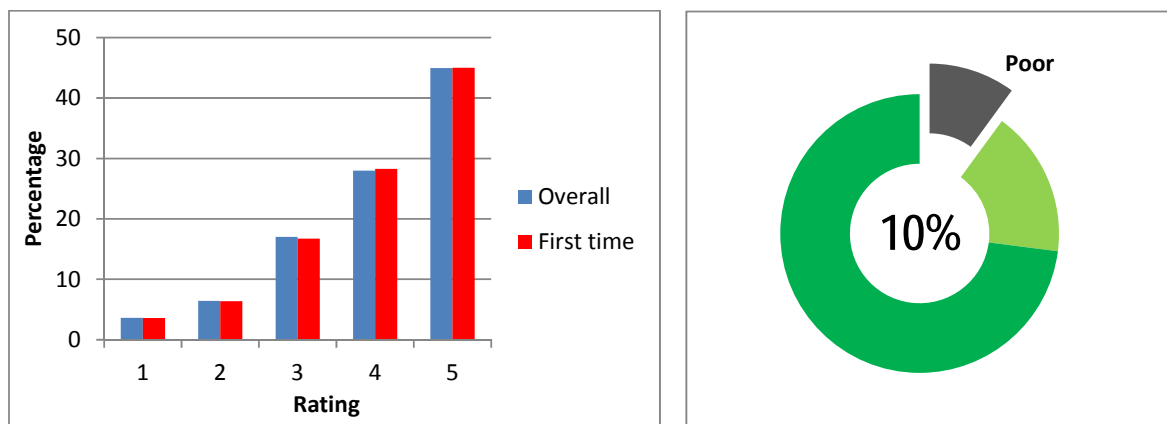


Figure 7: Rating - Overall Moodle usability

## 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?



Sixty seven percent read the site news. However, a third of the respondents said that they did not read the site news.

### 1.5.3 Comments on design/look/layout of homepage

A total of 485 comments were received on the homepage. The comments were grouped under the following categories:

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

**51% of the comments were tagged OK.** These respondents were satisfied with the current design of the homepage.

**7% of the comments were tagged Poor.** These respondents found the homepage to be boring, cluttered or crowded. Some respondents also stated that the site news was mostly outdated or irrelevant to them.

**17% of the comments were tagged as Suggestions.** The suggestions from respondents included adding links to other USP services so that users could easily access them from Moodle, improving the site news design and adding up-to-date and relevant news items only, and adding a section to highlight upcoming events at USP. There were also requests to add more pictures on the homepage to make it more attractive. Some users also stated that the two login boxes on the homepage were confusing and recommended to only have one login box.

The remaining comments were either “no comments” type of comments or could not be tagged under the categories mentioned above.

## 1.6 My Courses Page

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

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



The majority of respondents (88%) easily identified their courses for the current semester. 12% of the respondents faced some difficulty in quickly identifying their courses for the current semester.

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



The majority of respondents (84%) were able to easily access previous courses. 16% of the respondents faced some difficulty in accessing their courses from past 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 (91%).

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

A total of 428 comments were received. The comments were grouped under the following categories:

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

**43% of the comments were tagged OK.** These respondents were satisfied with the current design of the My Courses page.

**2% of the comments were tagged Poor.** These respondents considered the My Courses page to have a poor or confusing layout.

**20% 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 were either “no comments” type of comments or could not be tagged under the categories mentioned above.



## 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.

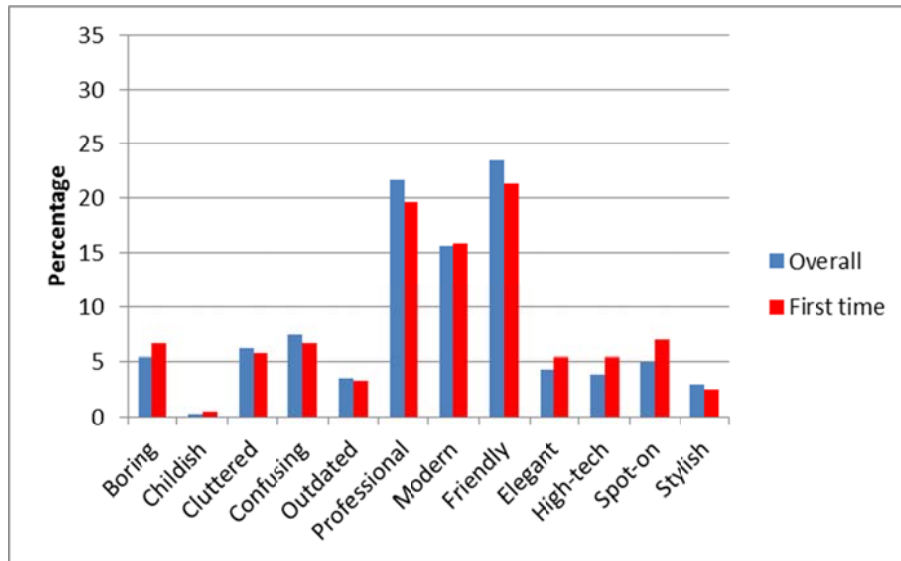


Figure 8: Course page classification

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, 23% of the respondents considered that the course page was aesthetically poor, while about 65% of the respondents considered that the course page was aesthetically very good.

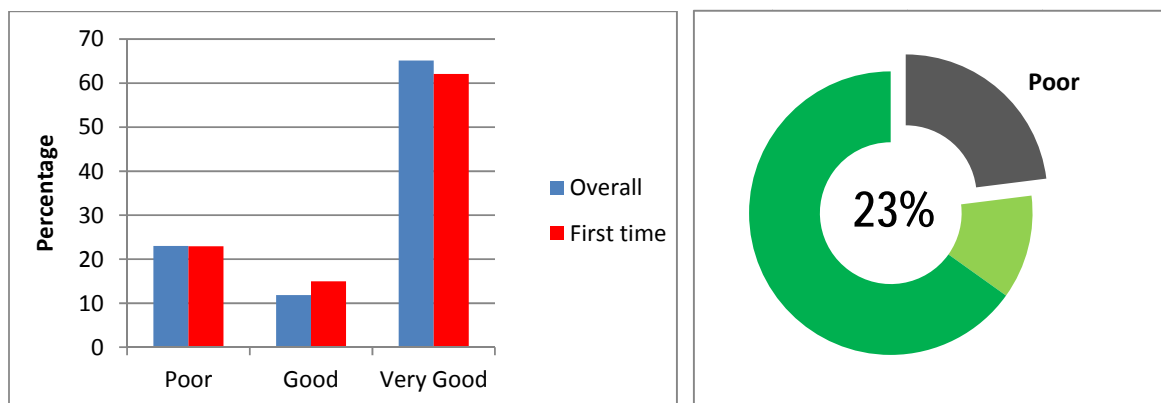


Figure 9: Categorisation of Course page

### 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 better appeal than the course page. There was a slight drop in the satisfaction level for the course page when compared to the overall Moodle site as shown in Figure 10 below.

There was a significant increase in those who consider the course page to be cluttered or confusing.

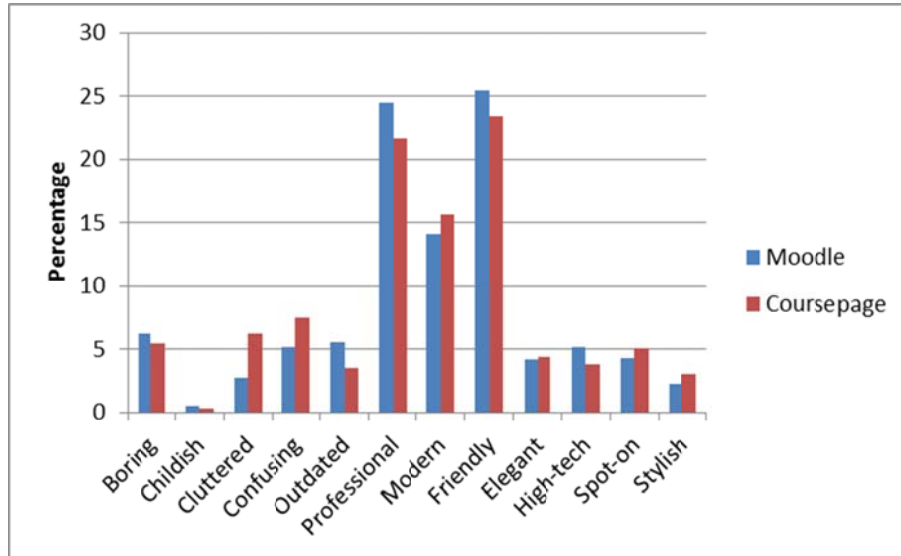


Figure 10: Comparison between Course page and overall Moodle site (All respondents)

When comparing the responses for first time users only, there were some significant areas of interest in the graph (Figure 11). There was a huge drop in those who consider the course page to have a “professional” look. There were notable increases in the numbers of responses for “Modern”, “Spot-on” and “Hi-tech” and this made up for the drop in “Professional”. There was a big increase in the numbers for those who consider the course page to be cluttered.

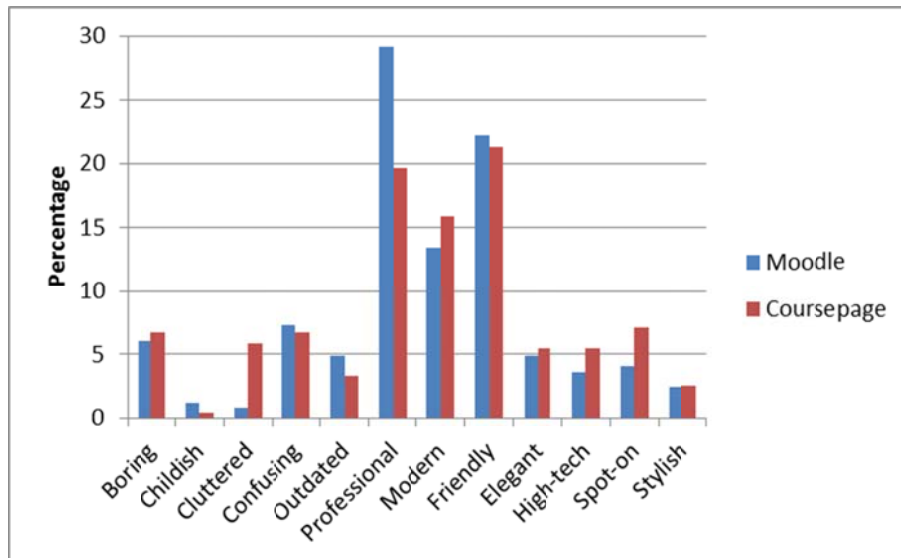


Figure 11: Comparison between Course page and overall Moodle site (First time users)

### 1.7.3 Easy to locate and access course information?



The majority of learners (86%) were able to locate and access course information easily.

14% of the respondents face some difficulty in easily accessing and locating information in their courses.

### 1.7.4 Course content layout

45% of the respondents preferred the contents in course page to be arranged by weeks rather than by topics or activities. Preference was also given to showing the current week's content at the top of the page.

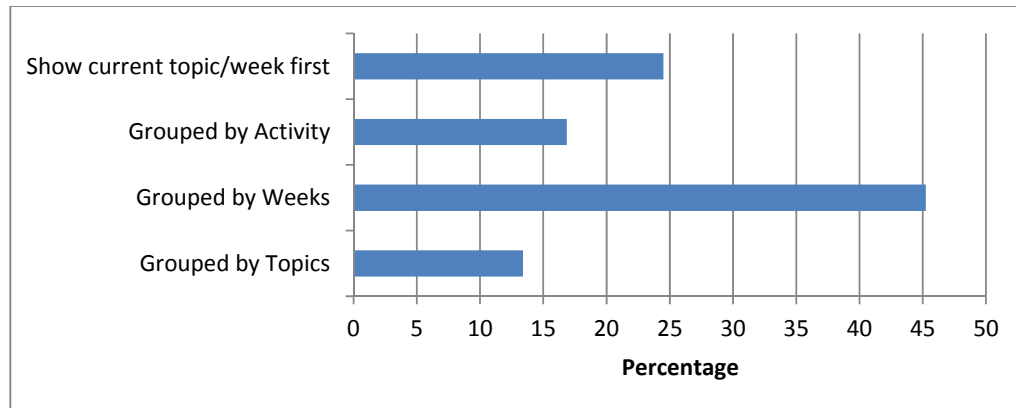


Figure 12: Course layout preference

### 1.7.5 Font sizes used in the course pages

The font sizes used in the course pages were appropriate for the majority (93%) of the respondents. For a small group of respondents (7%) the font sizes were too small to read. None of the respondents found the font sizes too big to read.

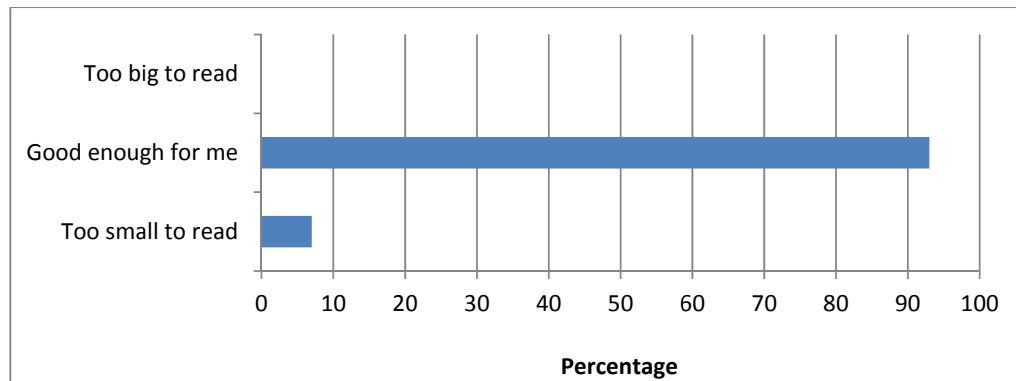


Figure 13: Font sizes used

### 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 620 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 (34%)**  
Current news announcements and notifications about the course should be clearly visible. Course updates (new/updated resources) should be easily identified.
- **Current course content/activities (31%)**  
The activities and resources 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. This is further validation of the feedback received in Section 1.7.4
- **Marksheet (5%)**  
The marks for the assessments should be updated in the Marksheet and the latest updates should be clearly indicated to the students.

Other areas that received comments were: course outline and study schedule, brief welcome message, and staff information.

### 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 337 comments were received. Most respondents had positive feelings about the course page design in general.

- 18% 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 (22%) was the main aspect that respondents liked.
- 6% of the comments appreciated the colourful design of the course page.
- Simplicity and easy to use (4%) was also mentioned.

13% of the respondents chose to give a neutral comment, neither mentioning what they liked or disliked. The remaining comments mentioned various items that were miniscule 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 357 comments were received. 51% of the comments stated that there wasn't any issue with the course page design. The comments were grouped into similar thematic areas that needed to be addressed. The main areas identified from the comments are as follows:

- **Cluttered/Confusing design (20%)**  
Respondents found some course pages cluttered with too much information. The design of some course pages was confusing to some users, lacking instructions to navigate the information. Users sometimes had to scroll a lot to reach to the desired section of the page.

- Inconsistent layout (5%)**  
 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.
- Incorrect/Outdated resources and activities (4%)**  
 Respondents sometimes found that the resources and activities added in the course pages were incorrect. The common types of activities and resources highlighted were course outlines linking to past year's document and the incorrect dates in the assignment dropboxes.

The remaining comments were either “no comments” type of comments or could not be tagged under the categories mentioned above.

### 1.9.1 Can you identify where the Log out option is?



Almost all users (98%) were aware of where the Log out option was located.

### 1.9.2 Do you log out after you are done using Moodle?

Most users (67%) logged out all the time when they finished using Moodle. More learners should learn to log out consistently especially when the majority had a good knowledge of where the log out option was.

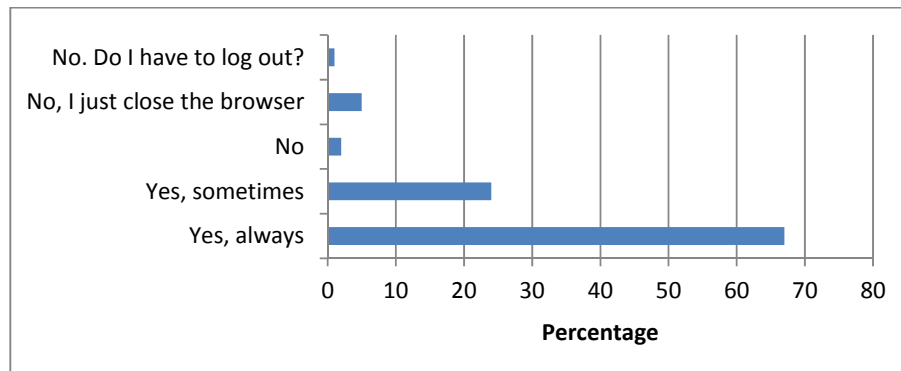
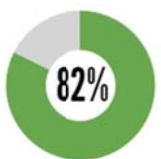


Figure 14: Log out habit

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



The majority of learners (82%) indicated they knew the location of the user guides. However, access to the user guide pages need to be further improved as indicated by 18% of the respondents.

### 1.9.4 What users want to be displayed in their logged in profile?

Full name, profile picture and student ID were the most preferred elements that respondents wanted to see in their account.

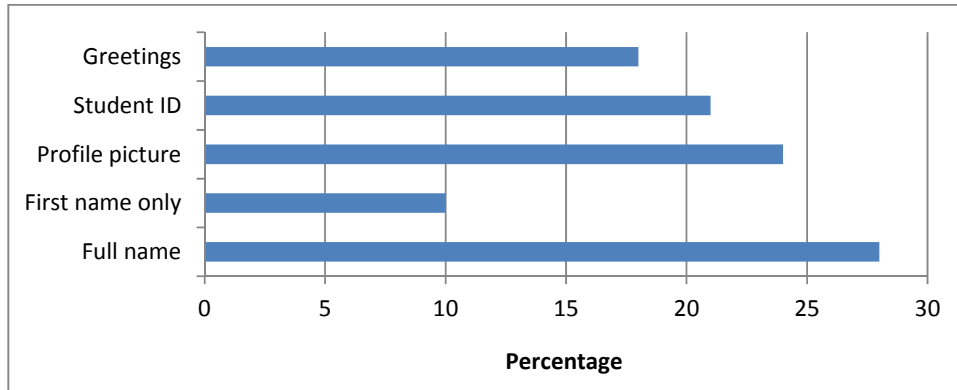


Figure 15: User Profile preference

# Section 2: Moodle 2015 Design

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Section 1 of this document highlights several elements that can be addressed to further improve the user experience for the Moodle users. While addressing some of the identified elements will take a longer process, some can be actioned a lot sooner.

The following elements, identified from Section 1 of this document, were incorporated into the Moodle design for 2015.

- The Moodle URL (elearn.usp.ac.fj) is now displayed on the Moodle homepage [1.3]. Section 1.3 reveals that only half of the respondents could correctly write down the Moodle URL. It is hoped that this small change will help users remember the Moodle URL.
- Several style changes to improve aesthetics of Moodle [1.4.1, 1.7.1, 1.7.8]. Improving aesthetics and creating a cleaner look for Moodle is an ongoing process.
- Quick Links added to the homepage [1.5.3]. Students can now easily access other relevant USP services from the Moodle homepage.
- Single login box on the homepage [1.5.3]. Multiple login boxes from the homepage were removed.
- User Guides block added on the homepage and to My Courses page [1.9.3]. This will now assist users to easily locate the user guide pages.
- Only relevant information is now posted in the Site News [1.5.3]. Presenting the news items in a more appealing way has been added to the “to-do” list and will be worked on later.
- Upcoming events section added [1.5.3]. This will keep users informed about relevant events for their courses and around USP.

Other findings of the survey will be taken into consideration for future Moodle development.

# Summary

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The Moodle User Feedback 2014 at The University of the South Pacific provided useful information on the learner's perspective on the university's Moodle platform. The findings of this survey helped the Learning Systems Team in the design of the Moodle platform for 2015. A number of user suggestions and ideas have been incorporated into the Moodle design for 2015.

In this inaugural survey, a total of 747 users filled in the survey from 13 campuses. A larger sample in the future will yield a broader spectrum of learners' perspectives of their use of Moodle. 79% of the users accessed Moodle on the daily basis. Most users showed great satisfaction with the overall Moodle design, giving high satisfaction rates. The Moodle design enabled users to easily log in and access their courses. Users preferred course content in Moodle to be arranged by weeks, with the current week's section displayed at the top of the page.

In spite of the high satisfaction ratings, some important issues were also highlighted. Inconsistent course layout and cluttered design in course pages were common complaints from the respondents. About 20% of the users showed some dissatisfaction with the Moodle design or had poor experiences with using Moodle. Addressing the issues faced by this user group will ensure that USP's Moodle platform caters for all learners. Changes for easier accessibility was made based on learners comments. Issues that needed more time to work were added to the To Do list.

The 2014 Moodle User Feedback has set a very high benchmark for evaluating user satisfaction of USP's Moodle platform and a review of the 2015 Moodle User Feedback will provide further information on users' perception of Moodle at the University of the South Pacific.



# Appendix 1

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Grouping into categories – words:

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

Grouping into categories – ratings:

Category	Rating
<b>Poor</b>	1
	2
<b>Good</b>	3
<b>Very Good</b>	4
	5