



Evaluation Report Highlights, Innovating e-Learning 2010 Online Conference

This report gives some of the highlights of the evaluation of the 2010 online conference. It has the following sections:

- A. Summary
- B. Facts and figures
- C. Twitter and other social media
- D. Formal feedback survey results

Where figures are given in brackets after the 2010 figures, they give the equivalent figure for 2009. However, some figures are not directly comparable because of the increase in the number of live sessions this year, compared with previous years.

As in previous years, the feedback is used to inform the planning for the next event.

A. Summary

- This was the largest ever JISC online conference, with 483 participants.
- All main sessions were provided live in Elluminate. This resulted in a reduction of activity in the asynchronous areas, which, however, were still very active with 124,300 words in 878 posts.
- The 'reading week' was changed to the 'pre-conference activity and reading week', and greatly expanded in terms of activities from Have-a-Go projects and Virtual Worlds tours.
- Technically, the conference ran without problems, though some delegates had client-side issues with Elluminate and Second Life.
- Feedback was, overall, extremely good.

B. Facts and Figures

Participants

	2008	2009	2010
Total	406	448	483

The past three years have shown consistent growth in numbers.

Activity – posts, words and Elluminate attendees

Overall the number of words/post is significantly less than last year, but feedback shows that this is due to the live Elluminate sessions, which, in effect, reduced both the time the asynch discussions were open, and provided an alternative focus for interaction. The actual figures are:

Words: 124,300 (176,800)

Posts: 878 (1386)



In terms of Elluminate, there were 1668 attendances at sessions (837 last year), though this is an underestimate, with some **minor over counting** due to multiple logins, and **significant undercounting** because numbers of viewings of recordings are not available.

C. Twitter and other social media

This year saw a much greater use of Twitter and other social media, notably blogs.

Prior to the start, we began tweeting about the conference as part of the publicity activities. During the conference, we used a dedicated Twitter feed to give notice of events, particularly when live sessions were due to start. We also used other feeds to promote key themes and messages emerging from the conference and also as a way of tracking feedback.

We also strongly promoted the use of a hash tag, `jiscel10`, to collect together the various tweets about the conference. By the end of December, there were 2199 tweets with that hashtag (597 last year). These can be seen at the archive at: <http://twapperkeeper.com/hashtag/jiscel10>

Additionally, numerous people blogged about the conference.

D. Formal feedback survey results

This survey was carried out shortly after the conference closed. The questions were a little different from previous years, in an attempt to find out what participants thought of the changes to the structure. Because of this, 2009 figures are only given where there is a valid direct comparison.

There were 118 (70) responses, a response rate of 25% (16%).

Did you find the pre-conference support and documentation helpful? (1 is not helpful at all, 5 is very helpful).

	2009	2010
1	0%	1%
2	0%	2%
3	9%	19%
4	50%	40%
5	41%	39%

Did you look at the information on making the most of the conference, and/or the delegate pack?

	Per cent
Yes	82%
No	18%



Selection of comments:

- Very useful, especially given the clear practical focus on how to make best use of time.
- Yes, planned work schedule around sessions and made use of one of the pre-conference sessions
- This was my first time attending an online conference, so the introductory information was very helpful in giving me an idea of how to engage in this environment.
- Gave a clear outline of how the programme would work
- Clear, easy to navigate and always there!
- Encouraged me to think through which sessions I most wanted to participate in and how to make the most of the sessions.

Before the first Elluminate session you attended, did you look at the guidance on setting up your system for Elluminate?

	Per cent
Yes	57%
No	43%

A surprisingly high number did not look at the Elluminate guidance beforehand.

Did you have any technical problems using Elluminate?

	Per cent
Yes	15%
No	85%

In spite of the large numbers of people not checking out Elluminate first, the numbers having problems with it were relatively low. Problems were usually related to institutional firewalls.

Have you any comments on how support and guidance could be improved?

There were very few suggestions for improvement – the comments mostly said that support and guidance was comprehensive and excellent.

Did you log in during the pre-conference activity and reading week?

	Per cent
Yes	67%
No	33%

Interestingly, more people (78%) logged in during this period last year, in spite of the pre-conference week being promoted much more this year, and there being far more activities in that period.



Overall, how useful did you find the Have-a-Go area? (1 is not useful at all, 5 is very useful).

	2009	2010
1	5%	0%
2	16%	9%
3	45%	29%
4	21%	40%
5	14%	22%

So 91% (80%) of people who viewed the Have-a-Go area found it useful or better.

Overall, how useful did you find the Virtual Worlds sessions? (1 is not useful at all, 5 is very useful).

	Per cent
1	11%
2	14%
3	36%
4	22%
5	17%

Overall, did you find the activities in the pre-conference activity and reading week valuable?

	Per cent
Yes	90%
No	10%

Approximately how many Elluminate sessions did you attend?

None	7%
1 to 2	18%
3 to 4	47%
5 to 6	22%
More than 6	6%

Was the number of Elluminate sessions:

Too many	6%
Too few	6%
About right	88%



From this, it is clear that the number of Elluminate sessions which were run was correct, neither too many nor too few. However, a number of people did choose to watch the recordings rather than the live session, which shows the value of having the recordings.

Overall, how would you rate the quality of the live presentations? (1 is poor, 5 is excellent)

	Per cent
1	1%
2	2%
3	18%
4	52%
5	27%

Did you participate in the asynchronous discussions which followed the live sessions?

	Per cent
Yes	44%
No	56%

This is probably an underestimate of participation in the forums, since it was clear from the comments that some people assumed participation meant posting, whereas in this context it also meant people who had read the discussions, but did not post. The question should have been phrased better. Nevertheless, it is also clear that the level of activity in the asynch areas was very significantly less than in previous years, both in volume of postings, and in people following the discussions. In general, the reasons given for this were time-related – most people (though not quite all) saw it as more important (or interesting) to attend the live sessions, and, if time was limited as it was for most delegates, this would then be at the expense of the asynchronous discussions. People prioritised the live sessions.

Overall, how would you rate the quality of the asynchronous discussions you followed or participated in? (1 is poor, 5 is excellent).

	Per cent
1	3%
2	5%
3	30%
4	45%
5	18%

So 92% of participants in the discussions saw the quality as good or better.

Would you like the asynchronous discussions to be open longer for posting?

	Per cent
Yes	45%
No	38%
Don't know	18%



Of those who did want the discussions to stay open longer, the suggested times ranged from one day to indefinitely.

Have you visited the conference since it closed to catch up on presentations and discussions?

	Per cent
Yes	32%
Not yet, but I intend to	58%
No, and I do not intend to	10%

Would you consider attending future online conferences?

	Abs	Per cent
Yes	108	96%
No	4	4%

Other comments from the survey

Overall, comments were very positive about the conference. Some examples are given below.

- The beauty of the JISC online conference is that it models best practice in using technology to create an immersive, collegiate and collaborative conference experience in which a rich range of views, debates and examples are captured and made visible. Perspective broadening and extremely worthwhile.
- I thoroughly enjoyed the conference and it was a first for me. It was relatively easy to find my way about and I enjoyed participating while sitting in the office. I thought there was a good range of speakers and that you catered for the newcomers and those with much more experience of e-learning.
- Overall an excellent conference with some insightful discussions and presentations. Really like the format of an online conference which you can dip into and I don't think the lack of f2f is a problem - just a different experience.
- This was a good, satisfactory online conference that had pockets of good resources and ideas.
- Have been to two or three Jisc online's now and they're really enjoyable, there's always something that catches my interest and sparks new ideas. Will definitely attend more, and hopefully manage to set aside more time for it!
- This was my first experience of an online conference and I loved it. It was convenient and for me really stimulating. I have used much of the information and plan to use more.
- Overall, the conference was an excellent experience with very interesting speakers and brilliant support and guidance throughout. Thank you very much to all involved in the organisation and presentation.
- The most useful thing for me about the way that the conference is organised is being able to go back and access the live sessions after they have taken place. Meetings and other



work make it hard to always attend every session. But being able to go back and watch the session is invaluable.

- Well done. I was delighted by the breadth and depth of the conference. I felt I gained much more from it than many "live" conferences.