



## Evaluation Report Highlights, Innovating e-Learning 2011 Online Conference

These are the highlights of the evaluation of the JISC funded Innovating e-Learning 2011 online conference. It has four main sections:

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

Where figures are given in brackets after the 2011 figures, they represent the equivalent figure for 2010.

### A. Summary

- Over 400 delegates registered this year. Although a reduction on last year's statistics (483), this still makes Innovating e-Learning 2011 a very large and successful online conference.
- All main sessions were provided live in Elluminate which encouraged a large amount of synchronous discussion. Participation in the asynchronous forums, however, continued to fall, with this year 78,000 words in 693 posts (124,300 words in 878 posts).
- The 'pre-conference activity and reading week' this year was re-branded to become the Activity Week, and was promoted much more heavily with direct targeting of the RSCs and FE through the RSC advisers. The result was both an increased number of live sessions and increased participation from delegates from both FE and HE, resulting in a much more vibrant and participative Activity Week.
- Technically, as in previous years, the conference ran, from the point of view of delegates, more or less without a hitch.
- Feedback, both formal and informal, was, again, excellent. Quotes included:
  - As ever this has been incredibly illuminating. Thank you for the chance to once again be involved in what I personally think is the most productive conference of the year. [Delegate]
  - I have thoroughly enjoyed the conference and found it a brilliant way of finding out about lots of projects and ideas that were off my radar. I found the use of Elluminate really interesting. I have used Elluminate before, and as somebody who trains people in its use, I was really surprised at how few problems it caused. Can't think of anything I would have had you do differently. It was probably one of the best conferences that I have attended. I never missed the coffee, the bar, or the meals associated with other conferences. [Delegate]
  - Want to say #jiscel11 was awesome ... [Delegate]
  - Was all really excellent [Presenter]

## B. Facts and Figures

The main conference sessions followed the same, successful, format as in previous years, i.e. two themes, each lasting two days. The main organisational difference with last year was the greatly increased role of the Activity Week. More sessions, more live events, more delegate participation, extended what was originally a four day conference, to a nine day conference.

In total, there were 37 different events during the conference. In addition to this, there were other activities, notably the conference blog, provided, as in previous years, by James Clay, ILT Manager at Gloucestershire College, and including a number of guest blogger spots.

### Participants

	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Total</b>	<b>406</b>	<b>448</b>	<b>483</b>	<b>402</b>

### Activity – posts, words and Elluminate attendees

Overall the number of words/posts is significantly less than last year (which was itself down from the previous year) but, as last year, this is almost certainly due to the effect of the live Elluminate sessions, which, in effect, reduced both the time the asynchronous discussions were available (because until the live presentation happened, delegates had no materials to discuss), and also provided an alternative focus for interaction. There was also a significant amount of synchronous discussion in the live sessions. The actual figures are:

**Words:** 78,000 (124,300)

**Posts:** 693 (878)

In terms of Elluminate, there were 1662 attendances at sessions (1668 last year).

## C. Formal feedback survey results

2010 figures are only given where there is a valid direct comparison. Figures are absolute (the actual numbers), unless percentages are indicated.

There were 111 (118) responses, a response rate of 28% (25%).

**Respondents were asked how they heard about the conference (they could select more than one):**

Mailshot	50
RSC	15
Twitter	16
Blog	5
JISC site	35
Other	26

'Other' included word of mouth, personal invite, etc.

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

	Per cent
1	2%
2	3%
3	7%
4	31%
5	47%
Didn't use it	10%

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

	2010	2011
Yes	82%	83%
No	18%	17%

So this is basically unchanged from last year. People who have attended previous conferences tend to be less inclined to look at this type of information.

**Selection of comments:**

- very useful
- Useful, picked up points to highlight to our staff as "good practice"!
- Only briefly looked as I have been involved in previous conferences - all very useful - as always
- Good, knew what to attend and how

- Inserting links into the programme was a great help. You would otherwise have to keep moving from one page to the next.
- It's always good to have some pointers to help you prepare.
- Very clear and informative.
- I used it to get an overview

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

	2010	2011
Yes	57%	60%
No	43%	40%

As last year, a high number did not look at the Elluminate guidance beforehand, in spite of this being stressed in pre-conference guidance. Having said that, as can be seen below, there were relatively few technical issues, and most of those related to a specific browser problem.

**Did you have any technical problems using Elluminate?**

	2010	2011
Yes	15%	17%
No	85%	82%

Interestingly, the numbers having technical problems has increased slightly (2011 doesn't add up to 100% because two people never used it). However, the largest number of problems related to using Chrome, which has known browser issues with Elluminate. These were easily fixed – or rather avoided – by using a different browser.

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

As last year, there were very few suggestions for improvement – the comments mostly said that support and guidance was comprehensive and excellent.

**Did you participate in any way during the pre-conference Activity Week (i.e. login to the conference platform and/or Elluminate?)**

	2010	2011
Yes	67%	75%
No	33%	25%

Participation increased significantly over last year.

**Overall, how useful did you find the Activity Week? (1 is not useful at all, 5 is very useful).**

	2010	2011
1	0%	2%
2	9%	5%
3	29%	16%
4	40%	32%
5	22%	42%

Selection of comments:

- Great to start getting "in the zone" even when time restricted by work stuff!
- Useful, found some new tools etc.
- Excellent range of activities and presentations on offer. Great to see involvement from the wider FE and Skills sector.
- It was a great addition to the conference. I learnt a great deal and there was that special buzz that only comes from people having something worthwhile to showcase. The fact that sessions could take place in Elluminate this year gave the old have a go area a new lease of life.
- I found it useful to get a background feel for the conference, and look at what is coming up. Also a feel for how the conference was being run. There were also many useful 'presentations'.

**Approximately how many live sessions did you attend during the Activity Week?**

None	10
1 to 2	31
3 to 4	24
5 to 6	12
More than 6	4

**Approximately how many [main conference] live sessions did you attend? If you subsequently viewed the recordings of a live session, please include these in your answer.**

None	6
1 to 2	25
3 to 4	36
5 to 6	23
More than 6	17

**Was the number of Elluminate sessions:**

	2010	2011
Too many	6%	3%
Too few	6%	4%
About right	88%	93%

As last year, most people thought we got the number of live sessions about right.

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

	2010	2011
1	1%	1%
2	2%	1%
3	18%	9%
4	52%	57%
5	27%	32%

This is a significant improvement on last year.

**Did you attend the Thinking Space session held at 9.00 on 23, 24, 25 November?**

Yes	15%
No	85%

- I enjoyed this, including the visuals. Pulled things together.
- I found it very useful to have the visualization of the yesterday's sessions. And to me it was a new and an inspiring way of summing up the impressions.
- Useful addition to the programme.
- Like the idea but it is difficult to attend many sessions in a busy workplace.
- Nice idea, and well executed. I would like to see that happen again.

**Did you participate in the asynchronous discussions which followed the live sessions? By 'participate' we mean reading them, even if you did not post in them.**

	2010	2011
Yes	44%	68%
No	56%	32%

The figures above are not directly comparable, in that in 2010 the question did not define 'participate', and it was clear from the answers in 2010 that people understood the question to mean 'did you post...' whereas this year, it is 'did you read and/or post...' – a radically different question. So it would be wrong to assume that this year, participation increased.

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

	2010	2011
1	3%	0%
2	5%	8%
3	30%	47%
4	45%	38%
5	18%	7%

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

	2010	2011
Yes	45%	53%
No	38%	24%
Don't know	18%	24%

**Given the increasing number of live sessions, do you think asynchronous discussions are still worth having in the conference?**

Yes	83%
No	3%
Not sure	14%

Interestingly, in spite of the considerably reduced asynchronous activity, and reduced quality, most people would like them to continue.

**Could you indicate which platforms you used to discuss the conference sessions.**

Respondents could tick more than one. These are absolute numbers rather than percentages.

Within the online conference itself	86
Twitter	34
Blogs	21
Facebook	1
Other	16

'Other' was primarily colleagues, rather than software platforms.

**Did you follow or use the conference hashtag, jiscel11?**

Yes	39%
No	61%

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

	2010	2011
Yes	32%	44%
Not yet, but I intend to	58%	52%
No, and I do not intend to	10%	4%

**Would you consider attending future online conferences?**

	2010	2011
Yes	96%	99%
No	4%	1%

**Do you think the fee of £50 represents value for money?**

Yes	83%
No	2%
Not sure	15%

## **D. Twitter and other social media**

Like last year, we used twitter to promote the conference, and people used Twitter and blogs to discuss the conference. Perhaps surprisingly, Facebook did not figure much, according to the survey results (see above). Most discussion still takes place within the conference platforms, which is inevitable given that the conference is closed, requiring a login – so tweeting, say, a link to a specific posting within the conference, is no use other than to people who are already delegates.

The hashtag for the conference was jiscel11. To the 29<sup>th</sup> November, there were 5746 tweets using this (this figure includes retweets). This compares with 2199 last year, so there is a significant increase.

Numerous people also blogged about the conference.