OU Mobile VLE: extending the reach of studying through the mobile web

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Monitoring usage
Building on prior longer-term logging of mobile usage on student portals. Working with comScore to interrogate device usage breakdown, comparing trends across different services.

Student survey feedback
Survey taken in October 2010 with n=557 responses, followed up by ongoing feedback.

Theme design
Desktop and mobile themes redesigned in parallel around the central study planner structure, and progress ‘tick boxes’. Usability and Accessibility tested with students.

Mobile-optimised resources
Activities optimised for smaller screens, concentrating on key and usable functions. Navigation and optional features separated out. Signposting to activities in planner, sub-pages and embedded throughout. Tool development for mobile now mainstreamed. Some constraint on text entry in first release.

Learning analytics
Current usage levels from viral, peer and self-discovery with no publicity. Longitudinal research will add further qualitative data for evaluation.

What next?
Extending mobile theme to other access points. Realigning subject-based entry points around qualifications.

Thin-client/HTML5 apps in prototype, including:
- Tokenised (easier) sign-in, with 2-tier authentication
- Cached content packages – incl multimedia and eBooks
- Mobile services for distance and blended learning
- Rich media contribution and collaboration

Generic guidance and device-specific peer support