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Student Survey - Level 1 Digital Trial Examinations 2016

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Information on the Survey and Participants

The student survey was designed to measure students' self-reported satisfaction and experience of the digital trial examinations, administered by schools during September and October 2016. The survey included establishing whether the students regularly use electronic devices at home and at school. Ten Level 1 Digital Trial Examinations were offered (Economics, Business Studies, History, Health, Geography, Science, Physics, Te Reo Rangatira, Spanish, and Samoan). 4,086 students participated in the Digital Trial Examinations.

Of the 4,086 students who participated in the Digital Trial Examinations, 663 (16%) completed one of two almost identical online surveys. Not all the students answered all the questions in the surveys.

The responses to identical questions from each survey have been combined in this report back. The survey was made available to students within the assessment solution, directly after they submitted their trial exam. The survey consisted of 12 questions. Some of the questions were open ended questions. The survey was designed to take approximately 5 minutes to complete.

There were technical issues with some of the Digital Trial Examinations, which impacted negatively on the experience of students sitting those examinations. Comments made by respondents to the survey reflect that.

Limitations

Only 663 of the possible 4,086 responses were received. This is not considered a representative enough number of respondents to draw any conclusions of students' experience of the Level 1 Digital Trial Examinations. Nonetheless the results and comments have been compiled and are presented here.

Due to technical issues experienced during the Trials, responses to two of the survey questions were not captured. These were:

Question 8: How easy was it to navigate through the digital assessment?

Question 9: How easy did you find entering your responses to the digital assessment?

Responses to a further two of the survey questions were only captured for 267 of the 663 respondents. These were:

Question 10: Do you agree or disagree with the following statement "I needed more preparation time for this digital assessment than for a paper-based assessment"?

Question 11: Do you agree or disagree with the following statement "Overall, I found doing this assessment digitally was a positive experience"?

Responses to a further two of the survey questions were only captured for 397 of the 663 respondents. These were:

Question 4a: How is digital technology used to support your learning at school? (In Class)?

Questions 4b: How is digital technology used to support your learning at school? (Homework)?

Appendix 1 is a summary of closed ended question results. Appendix 2 is a list of the student survey 1 questions. Appendix 3 is a list of the student survey 2 questions.

Main findings

Overall satisfaction

Respondents were divided about whether their experience of undertaking the Digital Trial Examination was positive, with 392 out of 614 agreeing or strongly agreeing it was a positive experience, and 222 out of 614 disagreeing or strongly disagreeing that it was a positive experience.

The aspect of the Digital Trial Examination that respondents said they liked most was the ability to type rather than handwrite.

“I liked the digital assessment because I think I have the ability to type faster than I can write. It's probably a bad thing in most exam cases but I really do like the fact that I can type in especially my History Exam. This means I have more time to think and if I forget to write something in a paragraph I can just as easily go back and fix it. I had no distractions because I turned off my notifications and this helped me as I feel this was a good way to do my exam. I think the only difficulty I had was the fact that I didn't have auto correct or spell check which would tell me when I had a word spelt wrong but overall I could see when I made a mistake.”

“I liked not having to write things out by hand as my writing tends to get messy and i become flustered. My hand also becomes sore from writing things by hand. I loved doing it digitally.”

“I liked how it was easy to change our answers if we did answered them wrong at first, it was a lot easier than the paper version in this aspect.”

Common dislikes expressed by students included navigation issues, the ability to cheat, issues with the graphing tool, the font size being too small, issues with typing and the noise of keyboards, and issues with assessing if they had written enough.

“It was hard to navigate the Punnett squares and spelling errors were more likely due to typing speeds and the small size of the font.”

“I did not like how time consuming some parts of the digital assessment were. Logging in was time consuming, and lots of people had technical difficulties throughout the exam that wasted time from their 3 hours. I liked how the exams were set out in a simple way to read and look through.”

“I felt it was hard to focus when typing and I was not able to organise my ideas as easily compared to the paper assessment. I also found it harder to read over work afterwards, and while typing I felt my thoughts weren't as processed compared to when writing in paper examinations. Also, I believe that the exams are not secure enough cheating wise, and this insecurity could possibly be exploited if these exams replace paper examinations. On a positive note, typing up assessments is sometimes faster than writing them down.”

“I didn't like that we haven't been taught how to use computers and laptops to type properly. It is also a hassle for exams where you need to draw diagrams to explain something (where you couldn't for this exam).”

“... because I am used to judging if I have written enough on paper, it is confusing digitally because typed words take up far less space than written, and the box does not indicate how much you are supposed to write. This could mean people spend way too long on questions that are not supposed to use all the time.”

“The tapping of the keyboards is so loud and distracting! “

The digital examination experience

Exam preparation

174 out of 249 respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement ‘I spent more time preparing for this digital exam than I would have if I had been doing it on paper’.

On the day

438 out of 583 respondents reported they used a school-provided device to complete their Digital Trial Examination, and 145 out of 583 their own device. 236 out of 443 respondents reported they used a desktop computer to complete their Digital Trial Examination, 201 out of 442 reported they used a laptop. Only 6 respondents reported they used a tablet.

183 out of 604 respondents reported experiencing network or device problems accessing or completing the Digital Trial Examination. Technical problems described included faulty internet connections, problems logging in, slow loading of new pages, the video resource not loading, and the ruler not working.

Digital technology at home and at school

At home

527 out of 612 respondents reported having more than one device at home. 382 out of 612 respondents reported having three different types of devices available at home.

At school

250 out of 360 respondents reported that digital technology is used in class to support their learning all of the time or some of the time. A further 101 out of 360 reported using digital technology in class occasionally.

263 out of 356 respondents reported that digital technology is used for homework all of the time or some of the time. A further 75 of 356 reported using digital technology in class occasionally.

344 out of 609 respondents reported that digital technology is used in internal assessments to support their learning all of the time or some of the time, 197 out of 609 reported it was used occasionally, and 68 out of 609 reported it was never used.

Suggestions/feedback

Respondents provided a range of suggestions in answer to the question “Are there any features or functions that you think future digital assessments should include?”. These included:

- keep things basic
- easier navigation and viewing of pages
- spell check
- larger font
- a highlighting tool
- option to bring own keyboards
- fixing the ruler and mapping tool
- improving the user interface
- tools to draw diagrams.

“Digital assessments are alright, but it is easier to do exams on paper. It would also be hard for certain subjects like math and science, to have digital assessments. Digital assessments are definitely more time consuming than paper exams, technical difficulties could have a big impact on a student's 3 hours and overall performance in the exam.”

“It does work in some ways, but I think that the cons outweigh the pros. Being able to cheat in these kinds of assessments seems remarkably easy and would be hard to monitor, a fact that students who would cheat would take advantage of. Digital and Networking problems during an exam could give some students disadvantages that would affect the fairness of the exam.”

“Please continue with this, I find it much easier to do digital assessments.”

“I struggled a lot doing this examination because I am a slow typist and had a headache and sore eyes the whole time. I also felt very dizzy and couldn't think properly.”

Summarised responses by question

Survey 1 Question 8 / Survey 2 Question 1: What device did you use to complete this digital assessment?

	Count	Percentage
My own	145	0.25
School provided	438	0.75
Total	583	1

Survey 1 Question 8 / Survey 2 Question 1: What device did you use to complete this digital assessment?

	Count	Percentage
Desktop	236	0.53
Laptop	201	0.45
Tablet	6	0.01
Total	443	0.99

Survey 1 Question 9 / Survey 2 Question 2: Did you experience any network or device problems accessing or completing this digital assessment?

	Count	Percentage
Device problem	67	0.11
Network problem	116	0.19
No problems	421	0.7
Total	604	1

Survey 1 Question 10 / Survey 2 Question 3: What devices do you have access to in your home? Select all that apply.

	Count	Percentage
Desktop Computer	17	0.03
Desktop Computer, Tablet	2	0
Laptop	46	0.08
Laptop, Desktop Computer	12	0.02
Laptop, Desktop Computer, Tablet	8	0.01
Laptop, Tablet	4	0.01
Smart Phone	20	0.03

	Count	Percentage
Smart Phone, Desktop Computer	12	0.02
Smart Phone, Desktop Computer, Tablet	13	0.02
Smart Phone, Laptop	109	0.18
Smart Phone, Laptop, Desktop Computer	75	0.12
Smart Phone, Laptop, Desktop Computer, Tablet	179	0.29
Smart Phone, Laptop, Tablet	107	0.17
Smart Phone, Tablet	6	0.01
Tablet	2	0
Total	612	0.99

Survey 1 Question 7a / Survey 2 Question 4a: How is digital technology used to support your learning at school? (In Class)?

	Count	Percentage
All the time	58	0.16
Some of the time	192	0.53
Occasionally	101	0.28
Never	9	0.02
Total	360	0.99

Survey 1 Question 7b / Survey 2 Question 4b: How is digital technology used to support your learning at school? (Homework)?

	Count	Percentage
All the time	97	0.27
Some of the time	166	0.47
Occasionally	75	0.21
Never	18	0.05
Total	356	1

Survey 1 Question 7c / Survey 2 Question 4c: How is digital technology used to support your learning at school? (Assessment)?

	Count	Percentage
All the time	95	0.16
Some of the time	249	0.41
Occasionally	197	0.32
Never	68	0.11
Total	609	1

Survey 1 Question 1 / Survey 2 Question 6: How easy was it to navigate through the digital assessment?

	Count	Percentage
Total	0	0

Survey 1 Question 2 / Survey 2 Question 7: How easy did you find entering your responses to the digital assessment?

	Count	Percentage
Total	0	0

Survey 1 Question 4 / Survey 2 Question 8: Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: "Overall, I found doing this assessment digitally was a positive experience"?

	Count	Percentage
Strongly agree	69	0.11
Agree	323	0.53
Disagree	144	0.23
Strongly Disagree	78	0.13
Total	614	1

Survey 1 Question 3 / Survey 2 Question 9: Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: "I needed more preparation time for this digital assessment than for a paper-based assessment"?

	Count	Percentage
Strongly agree	21	0.08
Agree	54	0.22
Disagree	132	0.53
Strongly Disagree	42	0.17
Total	249	1

Student survey 1 questions

- Question 1. How easy was it to navigate through the digital assessment?
- Question 2. How easy did you find entering your responses to the digital assessment?
- Question 3. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: “I needed more preparation time for this digital assessment than for a paper-based assessment”?
- Questions 4. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: “Overall, I found doing this assessment digitally was a positive experience”?
- Question 5. What, if anything, did you like or not like about completing the assessments digitally?
- Question 6. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: “Overall I am pleased I did this assessment digitally”? If so why?
- Question 7a. How is digital technology used to support your learning at school? (In Class)
- Question 7b. How is digital technology used to support your learning at school? (Homework)
- Question 7c. How is digital technology used to support your learning at school? (Assessment)
- Question 8. What device did you use to complete this digital assessment?
- Question 9. Did you experience any network or device problems accessing or completing this digital assessment? If so what?
- Question 10. What devices do you have access to in your home? Select all that apply.
- Question 11. Are there any specific features or functions that you think future digital assessments should include?
- Question 12. Please add any other feedback you have on the digital assessment.

Student survey 2 questions

- Question 1. What device did you use to complete this digital assessment?
- Question 2. Did you experience any network or device problems accessing or completing this digital assessment? If so what?
- Question 3. What devices do you have access to in your home? Select all that apply.
- Question 4a. How is digital technology used to support your learning at school? (In Class)
- Question 4b. How is digital technology used to support your learning at school? (Homework)
- Question 4c. How is digital technology used to support your learning at school? (Assessment)
- Question 5. What, if anything, did you like or not like about completing the assessments digitally?
- Question 6. How easy was it to navigate through the digital assessment?
- Question 7. How easy did you find entering your responses to the digital assessment?
- Question 8. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: "Overall, I found doing this assessment digitally was a positive experience"?
- Question 9. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: "I needed more preparation time for this digital assessment than for a paper-based assessment"?
- Question 10. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: "Overall, I found doing this assessment digitally was a positive experience"? If so why?
- Question 11. Are there any specific features or functions that you think future digital assessments should include?
- Question 12. Please add any other feedback you have on the digital assessment.