**Introduction**

The purpose of this survey was to investigate the experiences of students using the University’s centrally supported virtual learning environment (VLE) Yorkshare and Replay lecture recording service to support their learning. In this short report we will focus on the responses that students gave to the second set of survey questions, dealing with their use of the Replay system.

**Context**

The Replay system provides automated recording of the audio from a lecture (a presenter’s verbal delivery) with what appears on screen (for example presentation slides and in some rooms, visualisers).

There were a total of 1516 scheduled captures during Autumn and Spring 2013/14. Our quality checks indicated a successful recording for 89% of sessions in Autumn and 94% in Spring. This is a substantial improvement on the previous year. However, there was room for improvement in audio quality and reliability affecting 7% of all recordings.

For 2014-15 there are 2795 sessions scheduled for recording across 220 modules.

**Survey design**

The questions were drawn from the 2013 student survey on lecture capture and designed to help the University to learn about the current usage levels, strengths and weaknesses of the Replay system. Feedback from the 2013 survey has already helped inform the direction of support for the Replay service, and we will be using student views again this year to continue development of the service.

**Response rate**

A total of 628 students responded to the whole survey during the Summer Term (2013-14). 170 students contributed their experience of the Replay system with 380 students responding to questions investigating the demand for lecture capture.

This year respondents were spread across a greater number of Departments and Schools (33), with the highest number of responses from Replay users in Chemistry (16%), Biology (14%) and Education (11%). Psychology and The York Management School (TYMS) also had greater than 10 respondents.

The majority of respondents using Replay were undergraduates (70%), with most use in the first and second year. There was an increased proportional response from postgraduate students (30%), which may be in part due to four times the number of postgraduate sessions being recorded compared to the previous year.

**Key positive issues**

- 84% of respondents rated the quality of recordings as ‘good’ or ‘very good’.
- 93% of respondents indicated that the recordings benefited their learning ‘to some extent’ or ‘to a great extent’.
- 91% of respondents who had not experienced Replay would like to see recordings introduced in their Department.
- 78% of students said that the availability of recordings did not affect their decision to attend a ‘live’ lecture, emphasising the importance of lecturers who were engaging.
Key areas for improvement

- 43 respondents (26% of those with experience of Replay) indicated that they had encountered problems in accessing recordings, with audio quality, lack of direction where to find recordings, device compatibility and slow loading being mentioned.
- 26 students reported the running of the lecture was affected, however none specified in what way.
- 26 students reported issues with the quality of recordings such as background noise or quiet microphones.

Viewing patterns

The majority of viewings occur at least 3 days after the lecture, however in a change to the previous year a greater proportion of respondents view recordings within a few days of the session. 35% of respondents said that they most likely viewed lecture recordings on the same day or 2-3 days after the lecture, with 45% indicating a preference to view recordings closer to assessment periods.

"All lectures should be recorded. It helped me so much when it came to revision and I feel it definitely improved my grade."

46% of respondents indicated they had downloaded or viewed lecture recordings more than 10 times over the course of the academic year.

"I've used it this year to supplement my existing notes, and for revision purposes."

Respondents who did not watch recordings that were available to them cited adequate notes already taken, lack of awareness about the provision and making their own recordings of lectures on personal devices.

Accessing recordings

71% of respondents with experience of Replay (excluding N/A responses) reported no difficulties accessing or engaging with lecture recordings.

29% of respondents had encountered problems. These were for a number of reasons that included technical issues and problems of communication or expectation setting as to what sessions or content would be recorded.

"Not all are available and when lecturers teach using the blackboard you can't follow what's going on."

"Slow loading, not clearly shown on the VLE (‘hidden’ within several files)."

A small number of students reported they were unable to watch on certain devices, the system crashed or files were slow to download.

Action taken

Students are encouraged to contact vle-support@york.ac.uk at any point should they have difficulties accessing lecture recordings.

A new student guide is also available that outlines how to find and use Replay, and advises what to expect from the service: http://bit.ly/replay-student-guide

Quality of recordings

84% of respondents with experience of Replay rated the quality of recordings as ‘very good’ or ‘good’. No students said that the recording quality was ‘very poor’. However, some students indicated issues with background noise or quiet lecturers.

Action taken

The Replay team regularly monitors recording quality and where we identify simple improvements could be made, we provide technical briefings at the start of the session for the lecturer. All rooms are also now equipped with back-up microphones to record audio in case a clip-on microphone is not switched on.

Continued feedback and identification of problem areas are welcomed by contacting vle-support@york.ac.uk.
Impact on the ‘live’ lecture

Running of the lecture

Excluding ‘not sure’ responses, 82% of respondents where Replay was provided indicated that the process of recording did not affect the running of the live lecture.

Attendance

Just under 80% of respondents where Replay was provided (excluding ‘don’t know’) indicated that availability of recordings did not affect attendance at face-to-face sessions. Students, within their general comments for the survey, unsolicited have referred to the quality of teaching as a motivator for continued attendance:

“Our lecturers provide amazing learning experiences in their lectures so their replays would never affect my attendance, the replays are simply useful for more interactive revision than just reading a book.”

18% said their attendance was affected ‘to some extent’. Only 4 students indicated their attendance was affected ‘to a great extent’ due to the provision of recordings. However, lecture recordings provide support to students who are unavoidably absent:

“The recordings are a safety net, in the 3-4 lectures I’ve missed so far in my degree I have been ill, and it is very beneficial to have this resource to allow me to catch up in my own time.”

Comments from students indicate that they recognise concerns about attendance and provision of recordings, however they do encourage further adoption:

“I think it may make it easier for some people to miss lectures - knowing they can watch on the class capture later often makes people feel they don’t have to attend. This is a shame as I love that we have class capture!”

Learning and engagement

Of the respondents who had Replay recordings available to them, 93% felt that recordings assisted their overall learning for their module ‘to a great extent’ (45%) or ‘to some extent’ (47%).

Some students reported that they benefited from the lecture recordings allowing them to complete their notes. As one student states:

“I find it hard ’doing it live’ because there is little time to take in what the lecturer is saying and think about the points he/she made or take down notes while the lecturer keeps speaking and speaking.”

Another student indicates a change in practice within the lecture:

“I would be able to listen to the lecture fully without taking so many notes as I could watch back at a later date to get notes for the essay etc. This would mean I could engage fully.”

Student demand

91% of 172 students who had no experience of Replay responded that they would like lecture recordings to be available.

“It would be extremely helpful for revision to be able to listen to the lecture several weeks later.”

380 students responded to a question on whether Replay should be expanded to additional modules. 68% of respondents said ‘definitely’ and 18% ‘probably’. Only 5 students indicated ‘definitely not’. 23 students felt it was ‘not appropriate’ and 24 students were ‘not sure’.

There were five students who asked for video recordings beyond slides, for example whiteboard/chalkboard content that currently cannot be captured with our existing Replay system. We continue to invite interest in this area from both students and staff.

Thank you

Finally, we would like to thank all students who took the time to participate in the survey. If you have any further comments, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Matt Cornock, Lecture Recording Coordinator
Updated December 2014