



20.02.26 - Digital Support and Learning



Chair: Erin Gerard [EG] - VP Education

Student Attendees: 1 x School Rep, 1 x Academic Inclusivity Rep, 6 x HITS Rep, 7 x SAC Reps

Introduction and Welcome

Survey around IT Services shared at the start.

Introduction to Lunch and Listen and its purpose, as well as overview of the topic.

Purpose of the session is to explore the feedback course reps have been collecting, as well as their own ideas and opinions, to get a representative perspective of the student body and their academic experiences. Introduction to VP Education and school reps.

Update from VP Education:

- Profile Powerup event on Jan 22nd was successful
- Planning for International Women's Month alongside VP Activities and VP Community and Wellbeing
- Assessment Support Campaign with JMSU Voice
- Working with IT and Web design teams to improve our student's page
- AI policy and Canvas AI assistant
- Looking into sustainable materials for disabled students learning
- Continuing work with extending library opening hours

Summary of Minutes

Feedback across the three discussion areas highlights both strengths in current digital provision and several recurring challenges, particularly around awareness, infrastructure, and communication.

In terms of accessibility of digital support and services, students reported ongoing infrastructure issues across campus that also elude to estates and facilities, such as there not being enough plug sockets in lecture theatres or communal areas, and in some cases tables with built-in sockets are not plugged into the floor, limiting their usefulness.



Lunch & Listen



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Some suggested solutions were a power bank rental system and better collaboration with estates to ensure furniture is reconnected when moved. There were also concerns about access to appropriate IT equipment for disabled and neurodivergent students, including the need for dual or larger monitors, height-adjustable or standing desks, and more reliable access to disability-support software. Some specialist software to support these students can be unavailable (not on all laptops/desktops), unreliable, or difficult to locate. This can also apply for postgraduate students using dedicated rooms.

Additionally, Dell loan laptops were described as slow, Microsoft Authenticator logs students out too frequently (causing exacerbated stress during assessment periods), and the new resource booking system via Outlook is confusing and poorly advertised. The MyLJMU personalised circumstances form is difficult to navigate and confusing to fill in via the app, and printing services are described as expensive and unreliable. Students also noted that IT ticket responses can take a long time and often result in being redirected elsewhere without clear resolution.

Awareness and use of IT services emerged as a significant issue. Many students are unaware of where services are located, their opening hours, or that phone support is available seven days a week. The LJ Assist chatbot is largely unknown and difficult to find on the website. Although IT services are recognised as present during induction, students reported that the information is overwhelming and not retained, with little or no re-induction in later years of study. Students suggested improved training for course representatives so they can share key information to peers, and clearer campus maps could show exact service points, dedicated Teams channels for courses to centralise information, and refresher communications ahead of assessment periods. Clearer, more visible contact details and opening times were also requested.

Despite these challenges, students identified several positives. The loan laptop scheme is highly valued and appreciated, particularly the trust-based system and variety of devices available. In-person IT staff were described as friendly and helpful, and there are generally enough PCs across buildings to meet demand. Postgraduate rooms were seen as well-equipped and accessible. Overall, students recognise that IT services are available and that efforts are being made to support them digitally.

However, the dominant theme across discussions is that awareness and communication gaps prevent students from fully benefiting from existing services, so strengthening visibility, improving infrastructure reliability, and simplifying processes would significantly enhance the digital learning experience.

Closing of Session

Thanking Course Reps for attending and informing that this feedback will be shared with IT to help shape and improve future services and support. EG will update in the next session with what next steps are.