

Supplementary materials for manuscript: *“It ain’t what you use, it’s the way that you use it”*: How virtual learning environments may impact student mental wellbeing.

Topic Guide for Focus Groups – Indicative

Section 1

Q1: Which activities are part of your course for at least two weeks of this academic year? Prompts: lectures, seminars “so interactive group classes”, tutorials (one-to-one learning), practical class or workshop activities, other timetabled course-related activities?

Q2: How do you use your university’s VLE with any of these activities?

Q3: What and how does it impact on your studies/your learning? (prompt - coursework, revision for exams)

Q4: Patterns of use (not since the COVID-19)

- a) When, where generally logging onto university’s VLE? Which device(s) are you using? – Same for each task?
- b) When are you logging off? What makes it possible?
- c) Using university’s VLE differently on the weekend to how they are during the week? When? Where? For what purpose? Would you say this is in a typical week or at specific times?

Q5: Are there any other ways that you use [university’s VLE] for your studies? (How is this helpful/unhelpful?)

Section 2

Task – [see Method, Data Collection for details.]

Section 3

Q6: Imagine that you never had access to [university’s VLE] outside timetabled hours. [8.00-6.00 Monday to Friday]

- a) How - impact on your studies?
- b) How - impact on your mental wellbeing? (positively or negatively)

Section 4

Q7: How comfortable do you feel working within [university’s VLE]? Have you always felt comfortable with it during your course? [What impact has that had on your learning and mental wellbeing?

Q8: How much control do you feel you have about how and when you use it? (frequency and timing) How is that helpful/unhelpful?]

Q9: How do you feel about interacting with others in [university’s VLE] (e.g. through forums)

Q10: How do you feel about having a ‘digital footprint’ in [university’s VLE]? How do you feel about your module leader having access to your activity on [university’s VLE]?

Q11: Overall, how does [name of university’s VLE] impact on: your educational studies? And on your mental wellbeing?

Close:

Q12: Is there anything else that you would like to add to the discussion?

Thank you so much for giving your time to help with our research.