

Can a new OU Study App enhance the learning experience of students on S350, an online only module?

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Context

- OU students often have limited study time within their busy lives; a new OU Study App has been created for OU students to use whilst on mobile devices, for example whilst commuting.
- The new OU Study App aims to complement and enhance study of online modules by providing an opportunity for offline-study of key module components that can then synchronise with student progress on online sites during times of internet access. More details at [OU Study app project site](#)
- However, there is the concern that students may rely on the OU StudyApp too much and so miss some content that isn't currently available by the App which could result in more surface learning and so this needs monitoring.

Research questions

1. How can OU students best engage with the OU StudyApp to optimise their study?
2. What aspects of the App are critical to supporting the student learning journey and should be developed next/further?

Methodology

- Design of an OU Study App online diary for use by 12-15 S350 student volunteers for a period of up to 3 weeks.
- Participating students will keep a daily record of:
 - When and how they used the OU Study app and VLE;
 - Their perceptions of the value of the app to their study;
 - Any problems with studying using the app;
 - How the app supported/did not support their learning.
- Analysis of quantitative and qualitative data, linked to student demographic data for example, study intensity and current module registration.
- Follow up focus group.

Outputs - How the project outcomes could be used

Module teams and Associate Lecturers

- Advice on the introduction of the App, best practice and managing student expectations.

Students

- Advice on use of OU Study App to ensure it complements online study.
- Supporting students with workload management.

OU Study App team

- Feedback into the OUStudyApp team about student usage to inform subsequent development on the App.

Link with institutional and eSTEEeM priorities

- The project supports the OU's institutional priorities of **increased retention and success** and **supporting full time and flexible study**
- The project lies within the eSTEEeM theme of **supporting students**.
- **Learning design** – how does the OU study App **enhance or detract from the learning experience?**
Impact: The OU Study App will be rolled out to all modules in 20J so important to evaluate student expectations, use and feedback to aid full implementation.
- **Innovations in STEM** – gaining a fuller understanding of how students use particular technologies in distance learning
Impact: Better guidance to students on how to use Study App to complement and enhance learning. Prioritization of further functionalities in the App.
- **Better ways to support students in flexible study** – testing reality versus student personas developed as models of student activity.