

## Meeting of the Academic Board

2.00 pm on Wednesday, 28 October 2020  
in MS Teams

### Agenda

<i>No.</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Pages</i>	<i>Presenter</i>
9.	AULA Presentation of Evaluation	145 - 164	DJ

### Date of next meeting

**2.00 pm on Wednesday, 24 February 2021**

**Members:** Md Fazle Rabbi, Pat Bailey (Chair), Ian Albery, Asa Hilton Barber, Craig Barker, Gilberto Buzzi, Patrick Callaghan, Alessio Corso, Geoff Cox, Kate Ellis, Steve Faulkner, Gary Francis, Nadia Gaoua, Marc Griffith, Steve Hunter, Paul Ivey, Deborah Johnston, Janet Jones, Nicki Martin, Sarah Moore-Williams, Luke Murray, George Ofori, Jenny Owen, Tony Roberts, Carrie Rutherford, Warren Turner, Helen Young, Harriet Tollerson, Rosie Holden and Jane Wills

### Apologies:

**In attendance:** Dominique Phipp, John Cole, Sally Skillett-Moore, Richard Duke (for items 15-16 only), Ann Healey (for item 9 only), and Stuart Bannerman (for item 17 only)

This page is intentionally left blank

## Aula Pilot:

### London South Bank University Evaluation

21st September 2020 to 16th October 2020

[1. Executive Summary](#)

[2. Approach](#)

[2.1 Evaluation Methodology](#)

[2.2 Evaluation Timing](#)

[3. Testing Hypothesis 1: Students](#)

[3.1 Weekly Active Use](#)

[3.2 Connectedness](#)

[3.3 Ease of use](#)

[4. Testing Hypothesis 2: Academics' satisfaction](#)

[4.1 Perceived improved abilities to deliver hybrid learning](#)

[Most academics report positively about their improved abilities to deliver hybrid learning through using Aula:](#)

[4.2 Disappointment](#)

[4.3 Ease of process and use](#)

[5. Testing Hypothesis 3: Technology](#)

[6. Recommendations for improvement](#)

[6.1 Key recommendations and developments underway](#)

## 1. Executive Summary

This evaluation measures success against three hypotheses.

**Hypothesis 1:** Hybrid learning experiences on Aula can positively impact students' engagement with their learning and proxies for satisfaction with their learning.

**Hypothesis 2:** Hybrid learning experiences on Aula can positively impact academics' satisfaction, efficiency and impact on their students' learning.

**Hypothesis 3:** Aula is a scalable technology solution that can integrate with existing systems, work well with our IT teams and meet our data security and GDPR requirements. *Not tested as part of this report, as agreed with Deborah Johnston and Marc Griffith.*

**We consider we have made progress against the first two hypotheses, and we are in a strong position to test these hypotheses further.**

Academics and students believe that Aula's platform and learning design capabilities have supported them to begin a journey towards high-quality hybrid learning experiences, that will improve students' learning experiences and academics' satisfaction and ability to have an improved impact on their students' learning.

This is evident in the data collected that shows:

- **80% of academics felt working with Aula has improved their ability and skills** to teach in a hybrid mode, and 60% reported their approach to teaching and learning has improved
- **75% of academics and 68% of students would be disappointed not to use Aula in the future** (against a benchmark of 40%).
- **88% of staff and 80% of students feel easily connected** using Aula (compared to a benchmark of 41% from JISC digital insights 2018) and **85% of students reported feeling part of a community of staff and students via Aula.**

In addition, the feedback from the interviews represents how educators feel about the journey.

**It is clear that they can already see the benefits, whilst also understanding that there are further gains to come as behaviours develop:**



"I've really appreciated the structure that Aula set up for me because **that's allowed me to think very differently about my material** and present it along different lines in a different way, with an eye to **different ways of engaging the student that I wouldn't normally or previously have done.**"



"This is **much more interactive** (sic) and there is **two-way communication** between the lecturers and students."



**There is still work required to ensure a consistent and engaging experience for all students. The main areas for improvement that have emerged are:**

1. Training for academics can be improved to include examples of learning experiences to show what great teaching and learning on Aula looks like.
  - Aula has begun to facilitate these sessions with academics to ensure impact this semester.
2. Enrolment of students needs to be more instantaneous with more regular exchange of data between LSBU and Aula.
  - Aula has added this to the next Project Board agenda to ensure this is immediately addressed.
3. The use of two platforms was frustrating for academics and students.
  - This is a common concern in pilots of new technologies and approaches. We would recommend aiming to ring fence students by programme to avoid this where possible.

**Overall, the clear message is:**

- Academics and students like Aula and find it easy to use.
- Aula has helped academics teach in a hybrid mode and developed their pedagogical approach with greater positive impact on their students' learning experiences.
- Aula has connected students and academics to create a sense of community despite the challenges of the move to hybrid learning.

## 2. Approach

The information below details the scope of the pilot:

	Pilot (Sept-Dec 2020)	Evaluation
<b>Scope</b>		
Total number of students	326	40 survey responses (17%)
Total number of academics	14 Of which, 5 Module Leaders	8 survey responses (57% of academics) 5 Module Leaders were interviewed (100%)
Total number of modules	6 (across 2 schools)	

### 2.1 Evaluation Methodology

We have carried out this interim impact evaluation as set out in the document we agreed with LSBU: [‘Evaluation at Aula’](#).

The survey results, correlated with the interview responses and the platform data, allow us to understand whether students' and educators' experiences of Aula can work towards improving proxies for student satisfaction, and improved student retention.

### 2.2 Evaluation Timing

#### **Analytics**

The dates queried and analysed from the platform analytics were Monday 21st September 2020 to Friday 16th October 2020.

#### **Surveys and Interviews**

The surveys and interviews took place between Thursday 8th October 2020 and Thursday 22nd October 2020 following approval from the University.

### 3. Testing Hypothesis 1: Students

**Hypothesis 1:** Hybrid learning experiences on Aula can positively impact students' engagement with their learning and proxies for satisfaction with their learning.

In summary, the data suggests significant progress has been made towards this hypothesis:

- **Students are engaging in the platform:** 70% unique weekly active users.
- Students **feel easily connected** (80%) and **part of a community** (85%).
- Students are **satisfied with their experience so far** and appreciate **the ease of use of Aula compared to other platforms**.

#### 3.1 Weekly Active Use

WAU is Weekly Active Use. The active user count is the number of unique weekly active users. Percentage WAU is the proportion that are active on the platform each week, of the total number of unique users.

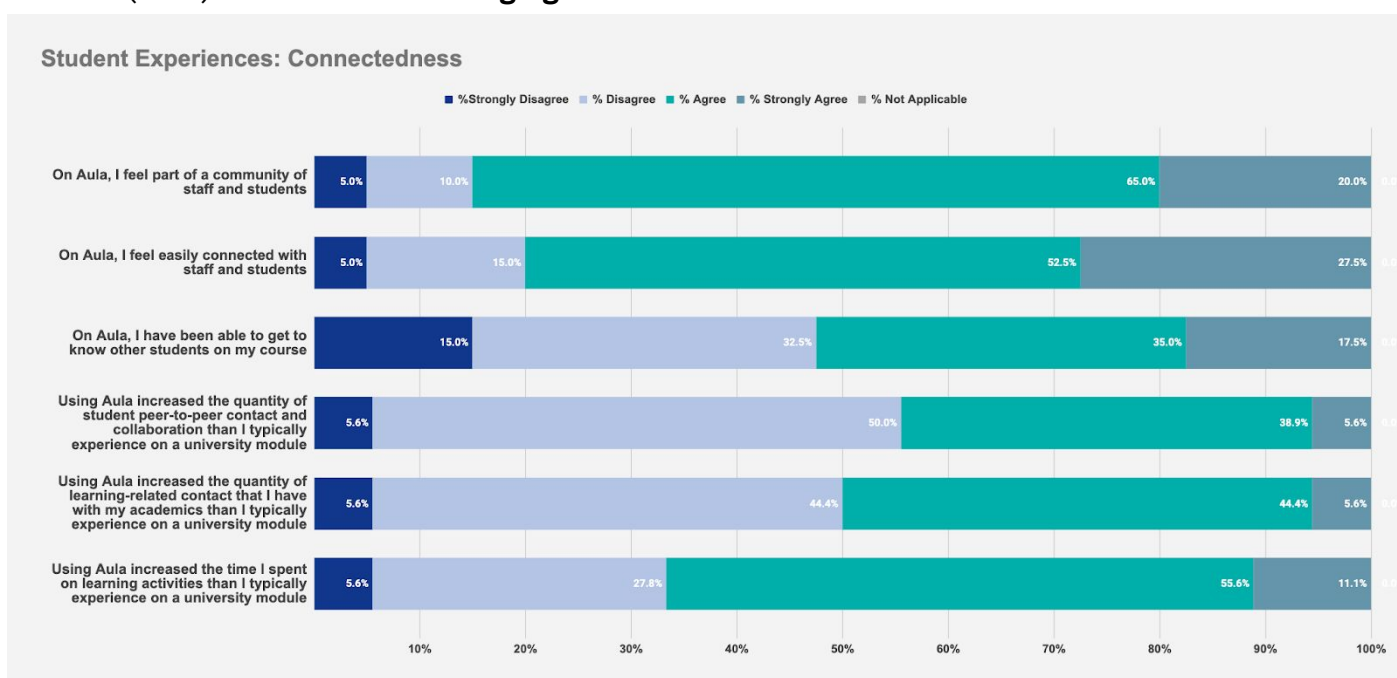


Students are using the platform as expected:

- The platform data shows the **usage is increasing** which suggests that the academics' investment in Aula is already having an impact.
- **67% students reported that using Aula increased the time they spent on learning activities.** See chart in 3.2.

#### 3.2 Connectedness

Thomas (2012)<sup>1</sup> asserts that **'belonging is critical to student retention and success.'**



<sup>1</sup> Thomas, L. (2012). Building student engagement and belonging in Higher Education at a time of change: final report from the What Works? Student Retention & Success programme. [online] London: Paul Hamlyn Foundation. Available at: [https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/system/files/what\\_works\\_student\\_retention\\_and\\_success\\_programme\\_2012\\_report.pdf](https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/system/files/what_works_student_retention_and_success_programme_2012_report.pdf)

The chart above shows that, based on survey response data from 40 students:

- **85%** report that **they feel part of a community of staff and students**, when using Aula.
- **80%** feel **easily connected with staff and students** when using Aula, compared to a JISC benchmark of 41% for traditional VLEs.
- **50% of the 19 respondents who were second year and above** students report that using **Aula increased the quantity of learning-related contact with academics** than they typically experience on a module.

Whilst these are encouraging responses, it is early in the partnership and we would expect to see the other responses improving as students and staff get to know the platform functionality and each other better.

Academics reported these better connections with students in interviews, illustrated by this comment:



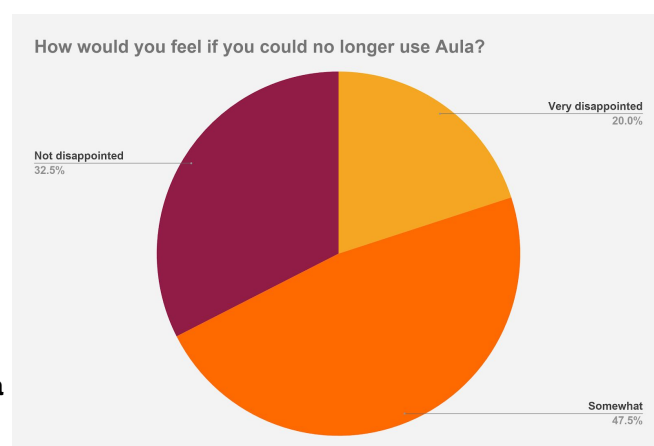
“I feel much **more in touch** with what genuinely **what students are thinking**. It suggests the things I need to give more clarity to. So **that's a really good thing.**”

### 3.3 Ease of use

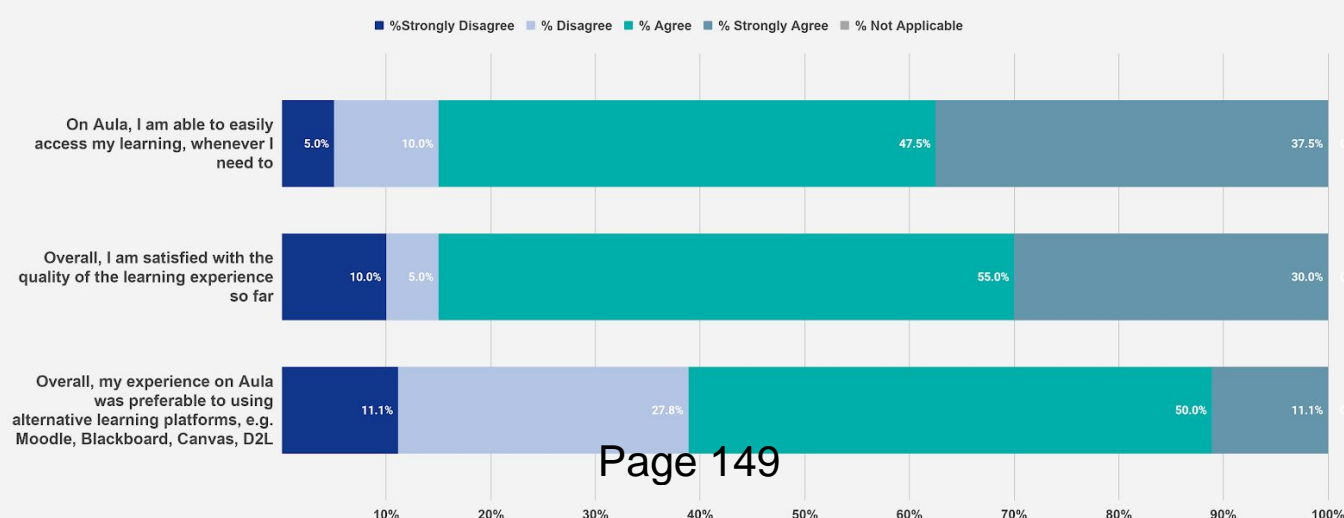
The chart shows that **68% of students would be disappointed to no longer use Aula**, compared to a benchmark set at 40%. Those not disappointed had typically experienced technology issues such as insufficient bandwidth (see section 6.1). A couple of students expressed their dislike of learning online.

In survey responses about their experience so far:

- **85%** of students report being able to **use Aula to easily access learning whenever they need to**.
- **85%** are **satisfied with the quality of the learning experience** so far.
- Of the 20 students asked (as they stated using an alternative VLE previously), **61%** say they **prefer Aula to other learning platforms**.
- In open responses, **65% said ease of use is a key benefit of using Aula**



### Student Experiences: Ease of Use



## 4. Testing Hypothesis 2: Academics' satisfaction

**Hypothesis 2:** Hybrid learning experiences on Aula can positively impact academics' satisfaction, efficiency and impact on their students' learning.

In summary, the data suggests significant progress has been made towards this hypothesis

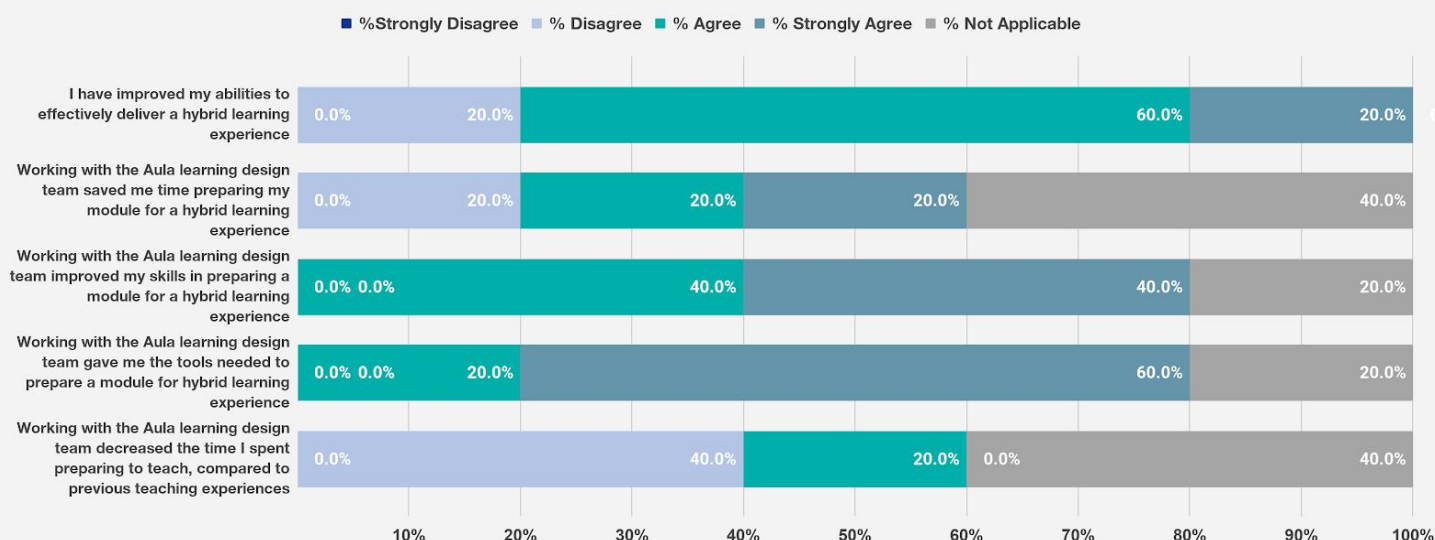
- **80%** of academics felt working with **Aula has improved their ability and skills to teach hybrid**, and many reported their pedagogical approaches have improved.
- 75% would be disappointed to no longer be able to use Aula.
- 76% are satisfied with the quality of teaching they can provide on Aula.

### 4.1 Perceived improved abilities to deliver hybrid learning

Most academics report positively about their improved abilities to deliver hybrid learning through using Aula:

- **80%** of academics felt working with **Aula improved their ability**, and **80%** felt it **gave them the skills and tools needed**, to teach hybrid courses
- **40%** of academics found it **saved them time working with Aula** to prepare their hybrid learning experiences.
  - In interviews they expanded that they felt that once they had learned how to use Aula, things became much quicker.
  - There were **suggestions as to how to speed up that learning for the future** (see section 6).
- **40% disagreed that working with the Aula team had decreased the time spent** preparing compared to previous teaching experiences.
  - In interviews it was suggested that this decrease was marred by their need to deliver online, as this meant they needed to be more prepared for teaching than they usually were for face to face delivery.
  - This **could be more related to the circumstances of this academic year**, than the Aula approach itself.

### Educator Experiences: Learning Design





Using Aula is helping some academics improve their teaching and learning approach:

- Four responses to open survey questions (26%) and three interviewees (60%) told us that **their pedagogy has improved or altered for the better through using Aula**, illustrated by this comment:



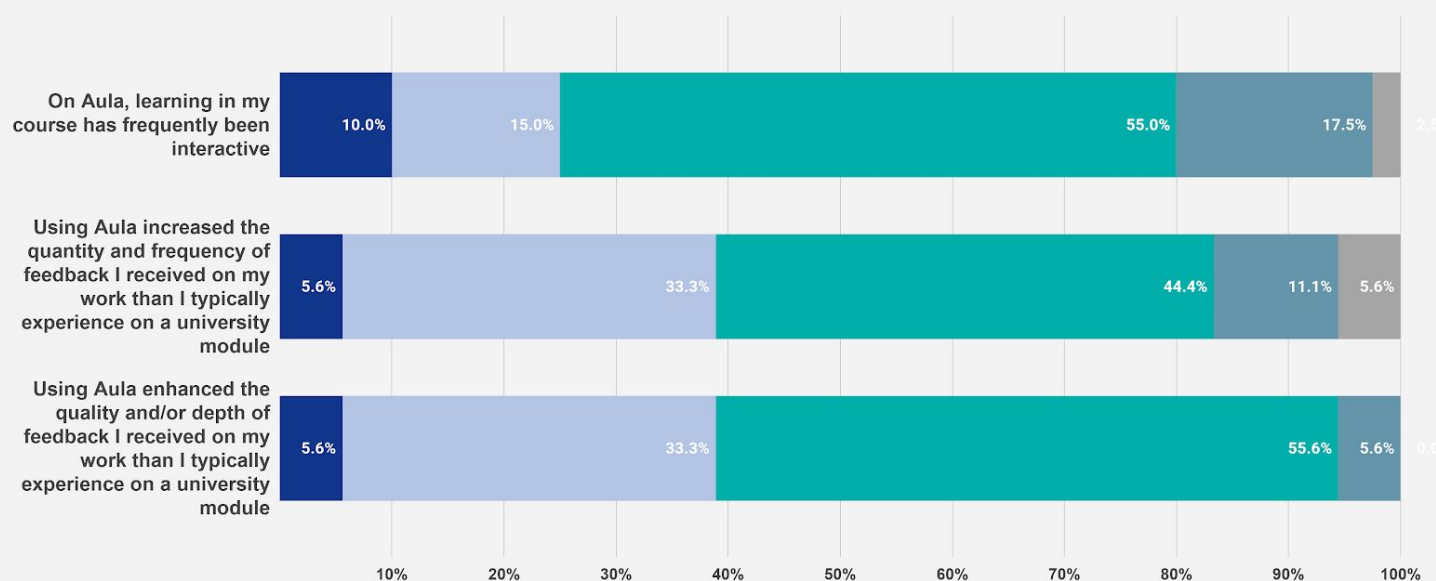
“The ability to actually access them **like you're in a normal classroom**, you'd be walking around and checking what they're doing. So **that's accessible online** as well. And **I was amazed** actually as a person who's teaching that I can do that online.”

In student survey responses from the 19 student respondents who were second year and above:

- **73%** agreed that **when using Aula, learning has been more interactive**.
- **56%** agreed that using **Aula increased the quantity and frequency of feedback** they received on their work than they typically experience on a university module.
- **61%** agreed that using **Aula enhanced the quality and/or depth of feedback** they received on their work than they typically experience on a university module.

### Student Experiences: Learning

■ %Strongly Disagree ■ % Disagree ■ % Agree ■ % Strongly Agree ■ % Not Applicable



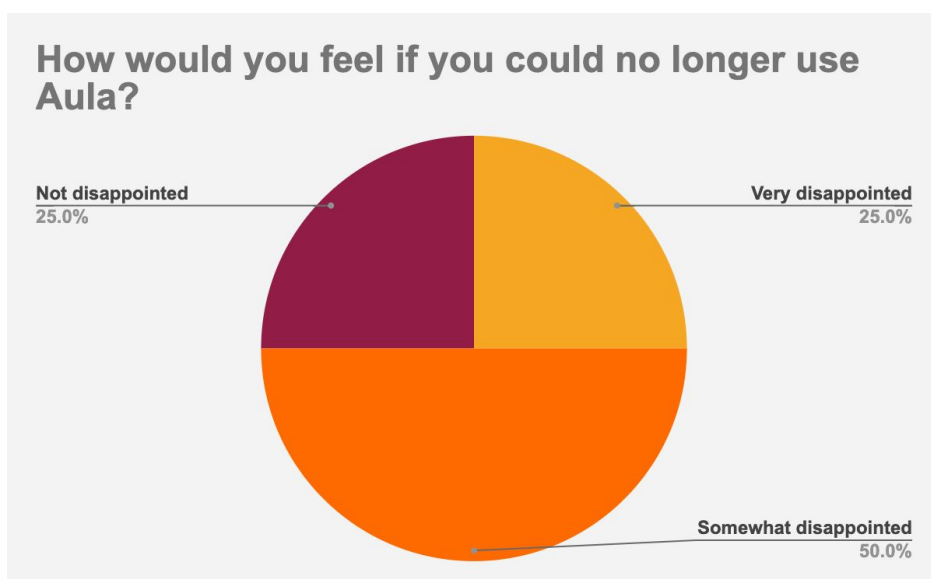
These responses suggest that despite there being few assessment opportunities so far, using Aula is encouraging academics to interact formatively with students to support their learning progress in a meaningful way.



## 4.2 Disappointment

We asked the academics how they would feel if they could no longer use Aula. The response was overwhelmingly positive:

- **75%** stated that they would be **very or somewhat disappointed to no longer use Aula.**



The interview responses suggest that is due to:

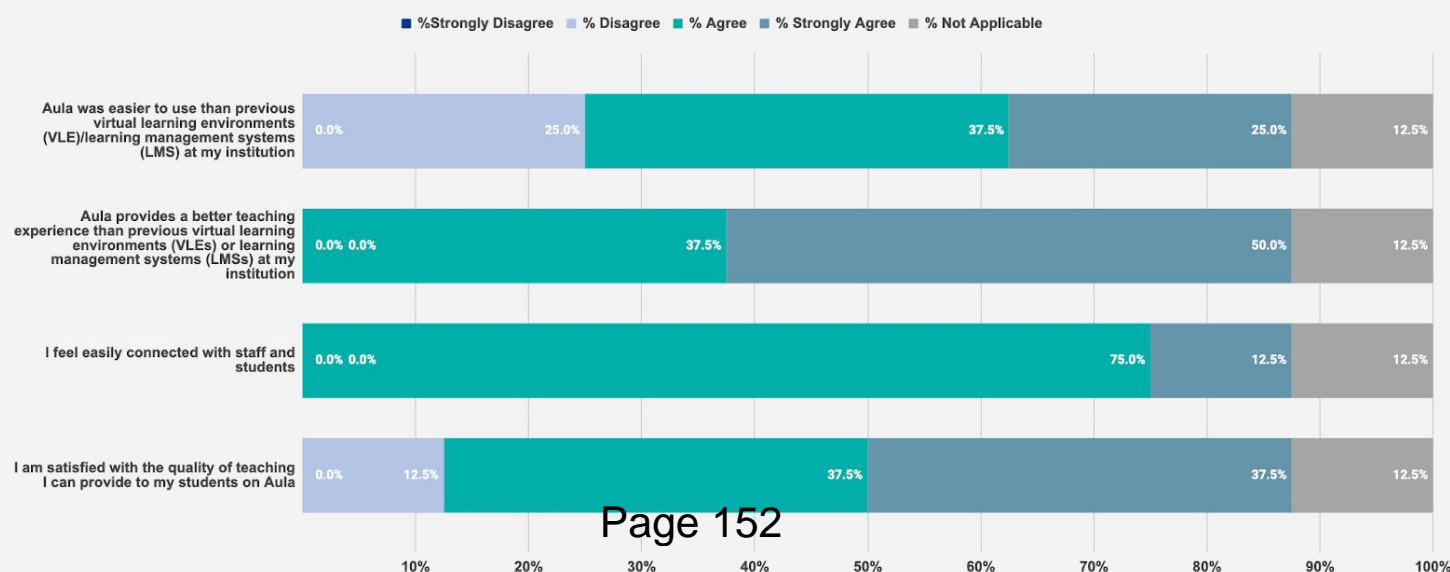
- The **user friendly** nature of the platform.
- The interactivity which helps **maintain engagement and a sense of community.**

## 4.3 Ease of process and use

Most academics report that they find Aula easy to use.

- The majority of interviewees, and 63% of survey responses, **consider Aula easier to use than Moodle.**
- 80% of open survey responses said it is easy to use.
- **88%** of staff feel **easily connected to students** using Aula.
- **75%** are **satisfied with the quality of teaching** they can provide on Aula.
- One complexity reported is the **use of two platforms** which is frustrating for students and academics - having just one platform would simplify and help drive engagement.

### Educator Experiences: Ease of Use



The academics' responses are illustrated by these interview comments:



“It’s **so easy** to edit. It really is very user-friendly from a staff perspective. Updating each section is **really quickly and easily done**. I like the way you can make it very aesthetically pleasing. So it’s very visual and it’s very pleasing on the eye. So **it’s engaging** from that perspective.”



“Aula is **more intuitive than Moodle** - it took me some time to get my head around what I was trying to do, but now I can add to and adapt sessions in a flexible ad hoc way. **I like this.**”

## 5. Testing Hypothesis 3: Technology

**Hypothesis 3:** Aula is a scalable technology solution that can integrate with existing systems, work well with our IT teams and meet our data security and GDPR requirements.

This hypothesis will be tested at a later date, to be confirmed by the project board.

## 6. Recommendations for improvement

At Aula we are committed to make the teaching and learning experience exceptional, and as part of that commitment we are always looking to learn from our academics and students and update our platform and learning design approach.

As part of both the surveys and interviews we asked:

- How can we improve Aula for you? (students and academics)
- What changes to the Aula platform would enable you to have a bigger impact on your students' learning experience? (academics)

Although it is early in the semester, academics and students are using the learning design and functionality of Aula. **The responses suggest that the experience has been very positive, and both groups have given constructive suggestions for improvement.**

### 6.1 Key recommendations and developments underway

These are the key recommendations and the plan we have already begun to implement:

Recommendation	Development plan
<p>45% of academics who responded asked for more thorough training for using Aula.</p> <p>They would appreciate some exemplar learning experiences to model best practices for teaching and learning as that would help quicker adoption of new techniques.</p>	<p>We are currently scheduling sessions with our SLD+ team (of Senior Learning Designers) to support academics with further training.</p> <p>We are also creating a test space for every educator to create a space to ‘play around’ alongside their existing module</p>



<p>A few academics implied more detailed training is needed for students in using Aula.</p>	<p>space. For the future, this would also be done before they have access to a module.</p> <p>In the test space, there's a platform overview video and an article on populating content, as well as clear instructions on how to access the SLD+ further training.</p>
<p>The ten suggestions for improvements to Aula from students were varied (including some small mentions of technical bugs, which have now been resolved). However, the main request from students was for more group work.</p> <p>Further technological issues seemed largely a result of bandwidth or access to data via mobile.</p>	<p>We are integrating our awareness of this request into the SLD+ training mentioned above, as well as building additional help articles for academics on how to facilitate group work effectively within Aula.</p> <p>Further to this, for the future, we will work with this group of students to further develop our learning design approaches to ensure this is accounted for.</p> <p>Bandwidth and data issues will be addressed in the next project board as a question from Aula to LSBU regarding current approaches to supporting those students who cannot access the internet, so we can support by signposting students to the relevant support services within the institution.</p>
<p>There were several requests for improved integration functionality. Three academics and one student asked for integration with Panopto.</p>	<p>From January 2021, Panopto will be available to our partners via an LTI integration. We will be working with the teams at LSBU to ensure this is set up, tested and working, as well as to facilitate any needed training.</p>
<p>Academics requested that enrolment for students on Aula needs to be more instantaneous - there is a delay between enrolment and gaining access.</p>	<p>The delay was due to the data being sent twice a week from the Registry team.</p> <p>To mitigate this further, prior to API integration, we are working with the project board to increase the cadence to three times a week.</p>

**In summary, the challenges faced are immediately surmountable and will improve the experience and outcomes both in this and the next semester.**



Learning  
Experience  
PLATFORM

PRESENTATION

AUDIO

Ann Healey

# Goals



Page 156



## Active Learning

To promote active learning

## Community

To promote a sense of community and belonging through conversation (student-student and student-lecturer)

## Engagement

To improve engagement and retention

## Hybrid Learning

To deliver a hybrid learning experience available from any device

## Satisfaction

To increase satisfaction

# Business Organisation and structures

Community **Journey**

- Materials
- Assignments
- Educator area

## Materials

- Welcome to Business Organisation and Str...
- Assessment and Module Guide
- Meet Our Group - Building Community
- Class values
- Library LinkedIn Learning and More Learnin...
- Safety on Campus
- Induction
- Module Box

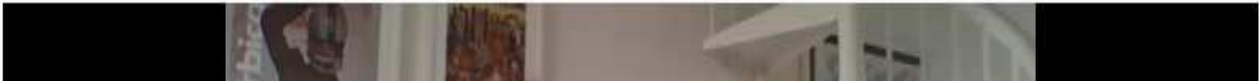
- Week 1
  - Week 1 Introduction, Questions, and Feedb...
  - Micro-Lecture 1
  - Micro-Lecture 2
  - Live Lecture Week 1

## Welcome to Business Organisation and Structures

Last edited: Sep 28, 08:01



Welcome to LSBU and this module, **Business Organisation and Structures**.  
I'm Ann Healey and I will be your module leader for this module. Please watch my welcome video below.



- Ne...
- Jennifer V
- Herman M
- Ali Firas A
- Business
- Chris Matt
- Group J
- Miriana B
- Group I
- Group H
- Timothy J
- Sofia Paln
- Team G
- Team F
- Huleimata
- Kathryn o
- Team D

Page 157

New message

ess Organisation and ...

Matthews

as Adnan Turki Hin...

J

an Makenze Dos Sa...

na Bosco

I

H

hy John

Palmieri

G

F

mata Sillah Dibada

yn o'reilly

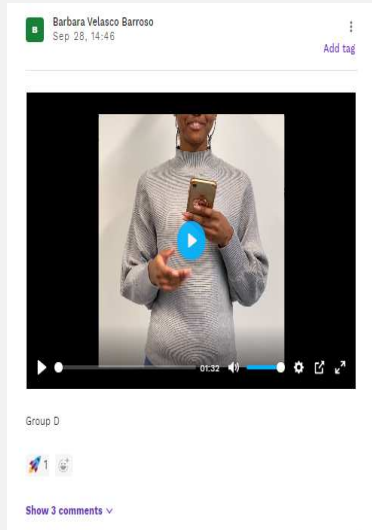
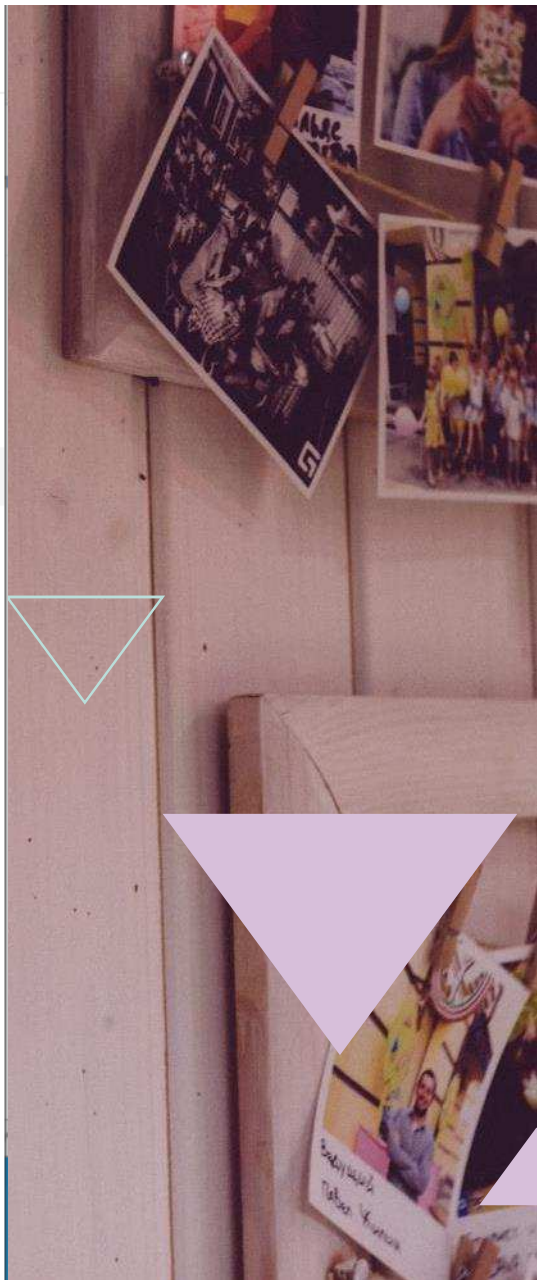
D

E

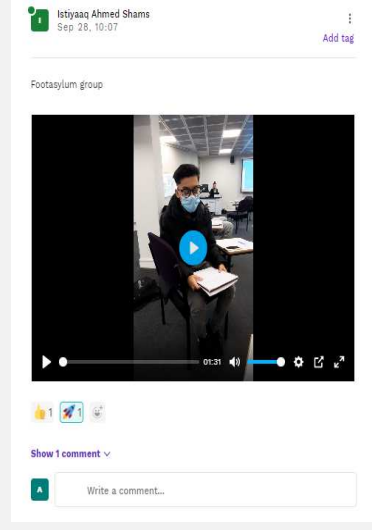
C

A

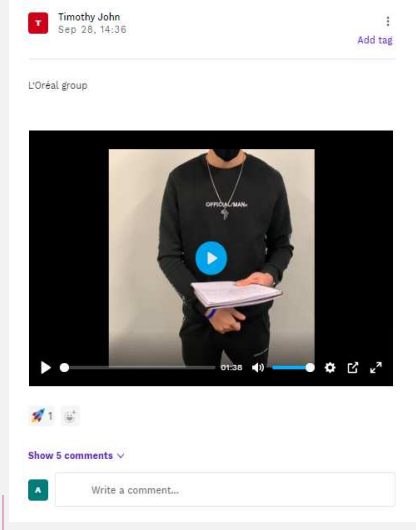
B



Co-create



Collaborate



Discuss



**B** Business Organisation and str...

Community Journey

**H** Herman Makenze Dos Santos Mangueira  
Oct 12, 15:33 Add tag

I've just recently joined this class, and I'm new to everything bare with me, how can I get the link to watch the live sessions and also how can I be added to a group?


Hide comments ^

**S** Sofia Palmieri  
Oct 12, 15:37

there, at the top next to "community" it says "journey", click on it and you will find the material of all four weeks

👍 1 ❤️ 2 😊

**A** Aris Gravis  
Oct 06, 14:49 Add tag



Hide comments ^

**J** Jennifer Williams Edema  
Oct 08, 08:14

Well done guys good work



## Post

Social media style feed allows students to post

Team A  
Poster from class activity

**Nafisa Bakkar.pdf**



Hide comments ^

**E** Elton Pedro  
Oct 09, 13:54

Well done !



## Comment

Peers can support others with learning



## Emoji

Students can use emojis to like comments

# Personal, Professional & Academic Development

Community Journey

developmental challenges on your learning in the PPA module using context objectives.

We can then work on that during our seminar next week.

Some food for thought now. Your article from Harvard Business review:

## Why Business School is a Great Time to Network

The why, how, and with whom of networking effectively.

<https://hbr.org/2019/04/why-business-school-is-a-great-time-to-network>

and a TED Talk on Career development:



## You're Always On: Your Career Development Cycle

As someone who never used his career center in undergrad, it's ironic that I'm a career consultant and proponent of all things career and



## Post

Lecturers and students post content



## Comment

Lecturers and students can engage in platform and comment



## Feedback

Lectures/students can provide written feedback so that everyone can see

# Business Organisation and structures

Community Journey


Chris Matthews Educator  
Oct 15, 13:54

Just wanted to say well done everyone for adapting so well to the "new normal" the work you are producing is incredible. Keep up the good work. I look forward to working with you all next semester.  
Kind regards  
Chris



Write a comment...


vodafone UK 11:55





## Business Organisation and structures


**Feed**

Material

 \*Aula Training Space\*

 Business Organisation and structures

 Settings

 Help & Feedback

Ann [unclear]  
Oct 1



**Hi Guys,**

**Firstly, wel class and e and have to**

I have just lecture (loc Journey/m lectures, be this week v content - it Please do p everyone ca question, I question.

**Finally, a bi this week. other as I h**

Happy Thur

 3 

See 1 comr

Ann Healey Educator  
Oct 01, 12:27

**Tips for your assignment:**


**So another reason why you may prefer to set up a limited liability company: Because you will pay corporation tax and save money.**

The Corporation Tax rate for company profits for the [2020/21 and 19/20 tax year](#) is 19% – a business with £100,000 in annual profit will pay £19,000 in Corporation Tax (a sole trader earning the same amount, would be taxed at 40%)

**Big businesses are good at paying as little tax as possible:**

The key to making sure you pay no more Corporation Tax than you have to is to claim every allowable deduction and expense to give an accurate picture of your profits.

Read the article below: Is this fair? Comment below.



**Amazon pays £290m in UK tax as sales surge to £14bn**



The tech giant has faced scrutiny over its UK tax bill, but says it pays "all taxes required".

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-54082273>

Hide comments ^

Huleimata Sillah Dibada  
Oct 01, 18:59

thank you so much :)

 1 

Pass rates for at risk students can increase by 33% using active learning

# DISSATISFACTION?

Aula as it's very easy to access and easy to communicate with both the teacher and class mates. It is easy to find all the work needed

Some of the things weren't very clear, and I have problems finding the video on AULA

Aula is very good and easy for using, only I will be happy if the same materials are clear for studying

It's difficult to navigate however makes all the learning materials accessible

The content is very organized and easy to use sometimes but is a good app

Navigation needs to be more available

yes, I like it

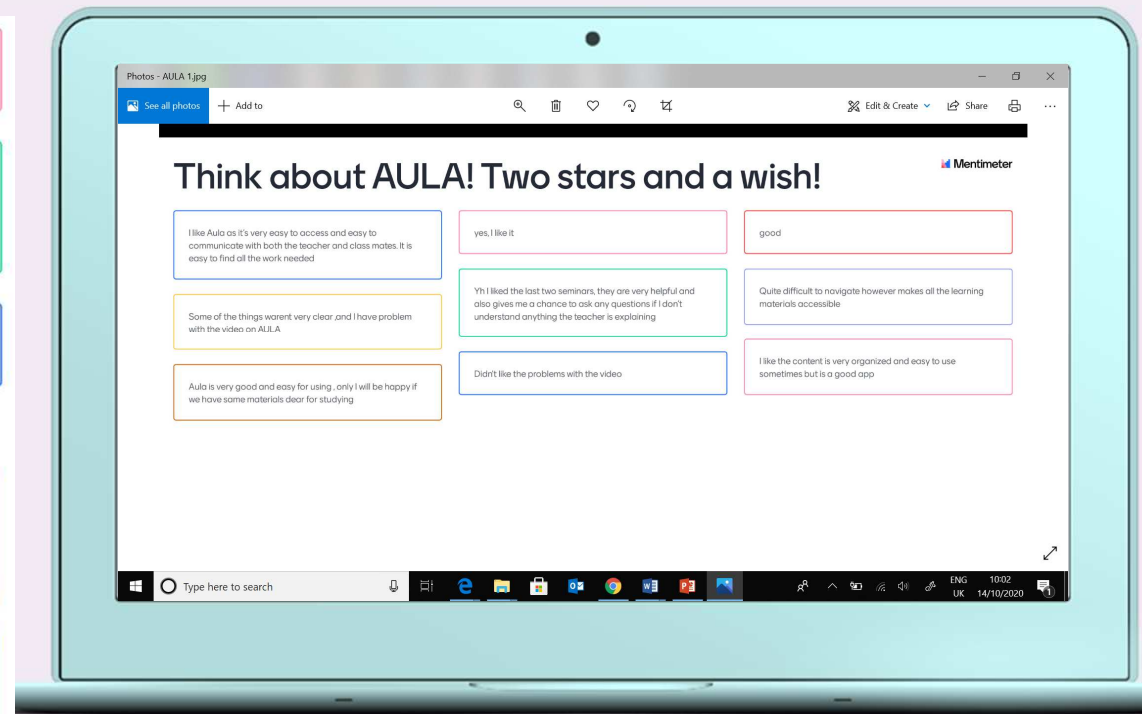
Yh I liked the last two seminars, they are very helpful and also gives me a chance to ask any questions if I don't understand anything the teacher is explaining

Didn't like the problems with the video

I do like aula because we have all recordings from lectures and seminars. I like the fact that we can easily chat and find out things quickly 😊 I don't have anything bad to say for now

I like how it's a hub for our Business assignments. One problem I have with AULA is that the mobile app isn't as visually clear to navigate well compared to the website version regarding finding PowerPoint presentations.

Needs to better information displacement as it's not even close to be good. Navigation is just none.



- Builds community
- Fosters a sense of belonging
- Promotes student-student feedback
- Promotes student-lecturer feedback
- Improves engagement and retention
- Delivers an effective and engaging hybrid learning experience





THANK  
YOU

Healey

Dr. Eleni Meletiadou

Ann Healey