



Teaching with twitter: An Extension to the Learning Environment



Paul Middleditch
University of Manchester



Will Moindrot
Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine

*See early results forthcoming in: Journal of Perspectives in Applied Academic Practice 2015
Vol 3(2)*

Teaching with twitter: An Extension to the Learning Environment

This session is interactive so please prepare a web enabled device as follows:

visit www.rwpoll.com

Session ID: **manc** (lower/upper case)

You should see “Faded clock”



TurningPoint

Feel free to leave anon feedback via your mobile device during any part of this presentation [use messaging from the top right menu button]



Teaching with twitter



Today's talk.....

About Twitter

Background/Project

Examples of Twitter in Practice

Student Survey Evidence

Recommendations

Conclusion



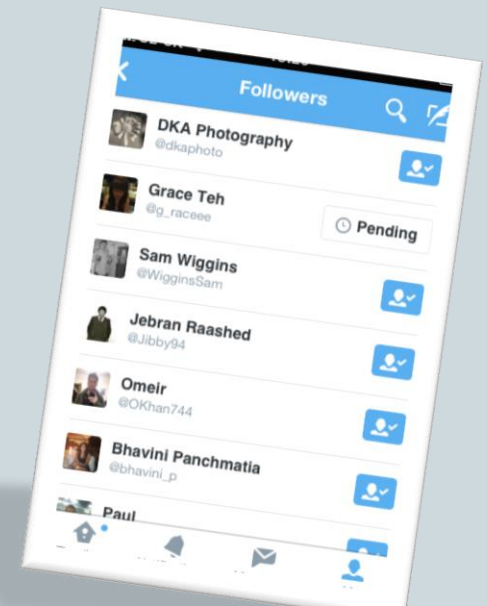
Teaching with twitter



What is twitter?

Twitter is a social media platform that facilitates instant communication with people that you follow or follow you.

You can view a timeline of announcements of people you follow and make announcements to your followers





Teaching with twitter



Project: 'Teaching with twitter' 2013 - 2015

Twitter is a well known communication tool but how can it be used to improve the student experience in higher education?

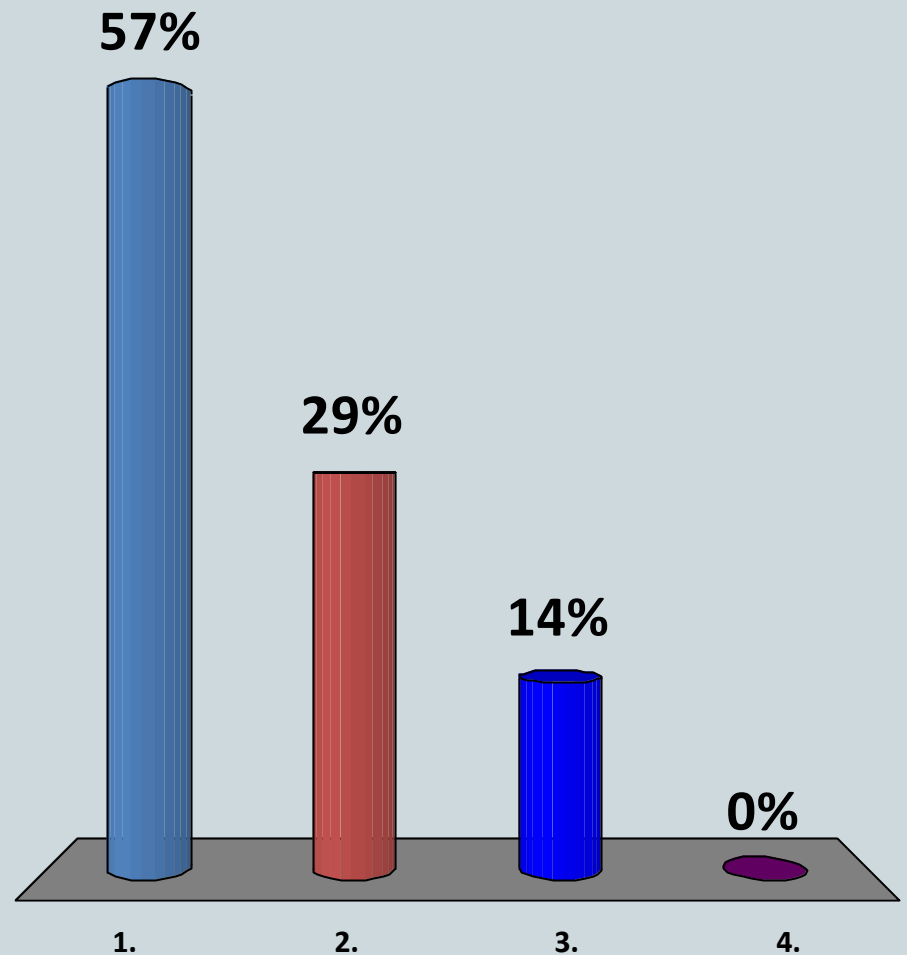
Early Aims:

To re-instate the 'lost' communication channel in the VLE and create course community/social benefits.

To reinforce engagement type found from the free text facility in Turningpoint Responseware.

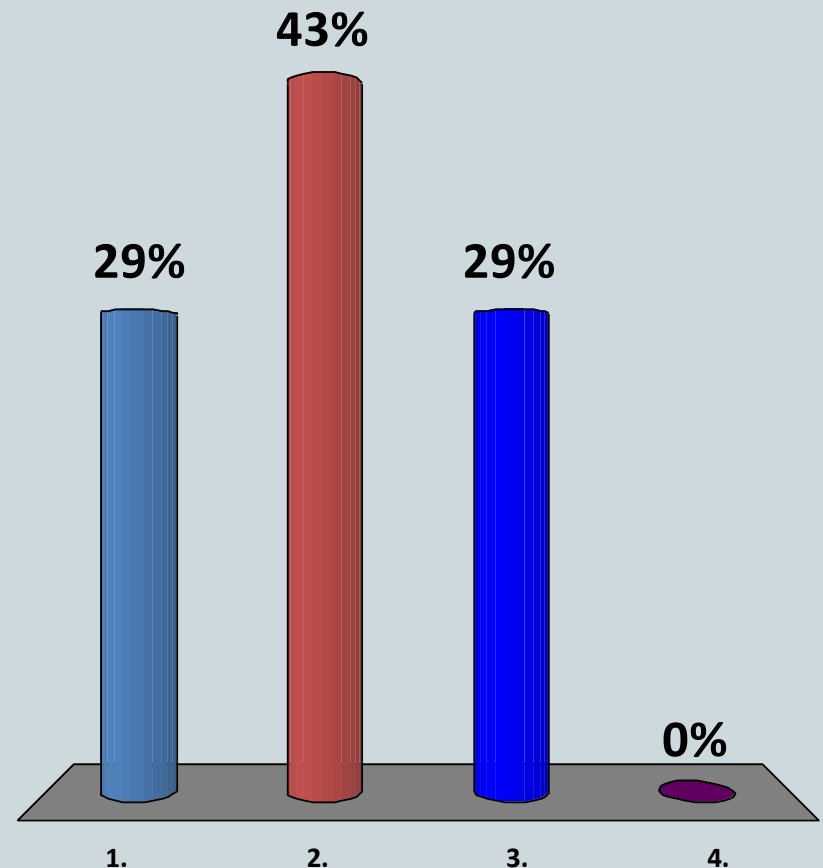
Do you have a twitter account?

1. Yes and I am a regular user.
2. Yes and I am an irregular user.
3. No, but I am thinking of opening one.
4. No and I am not thinking of opening one.



Which use of twitter do you see as being of most value?

1. To reinforce course announcements.
2. Enable students to ask questions about the course.
3. To enable students to learn from each other.
4. Provision of other benefits to students.



Twitter in teaching at Manchester since 2013



ECON10042 – 1st Year UG
Macroeconomic Principles –
approx 450 students

ECON20401 – 2nd Year UG
Macroeconomics IIA – approx
500 students

- Contact between lecturer and student is efficient, from palm to palm.
- Students are more likely to engage in a less formal setting.
- Questions need to be focussed making queries easier to respond to (140 chars.).
- Lecturers can more easily identify the sender of a tweet.
- Answers to questions are ‘reply all’ saving time on repetition. Course hashtag becomes an FAQ.

Student innovations from twitter

Some less obvious benefits that have presented themselves from the students' own use.

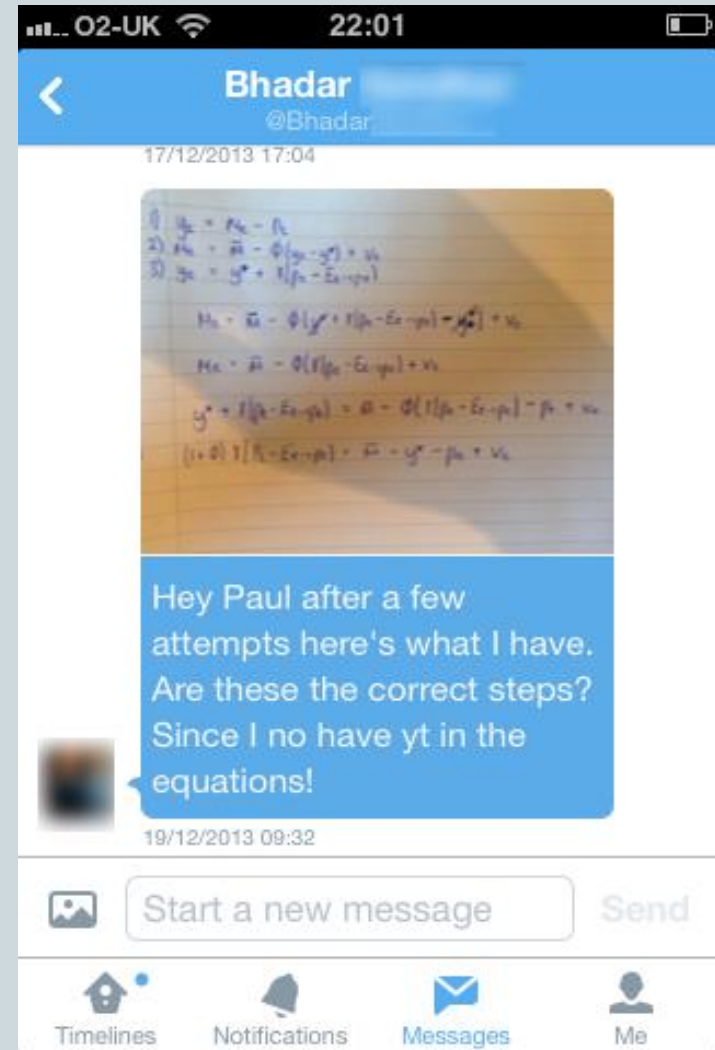
1. Students have used the image attachment to ask me questions on their technical/maths attempts.
2. Students have found a platform to learn from each other (aka peer interaction).
3. Students have a channel to feedback to you on how the course is going and also to contribute.

Twitter in practice

With a limit of 140 characters students learned to include a photograph of their mathematical attempts in their tweets.

With images embedded in this way there is no need for screen switching, making questions easier to answer.

Students enjoyed the immediacy of a response from their lecturer



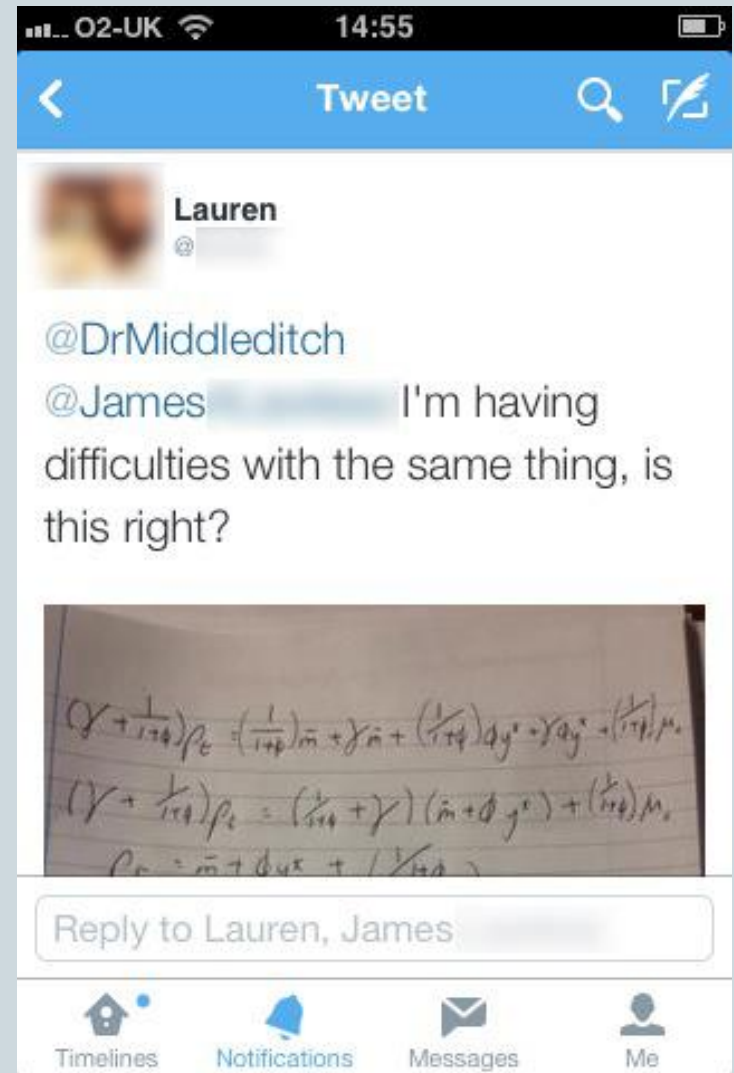
Twitter in practice

Students learned to collaborate with each other from watching the interactions of others:

twitter enables peer interaction.

Also:

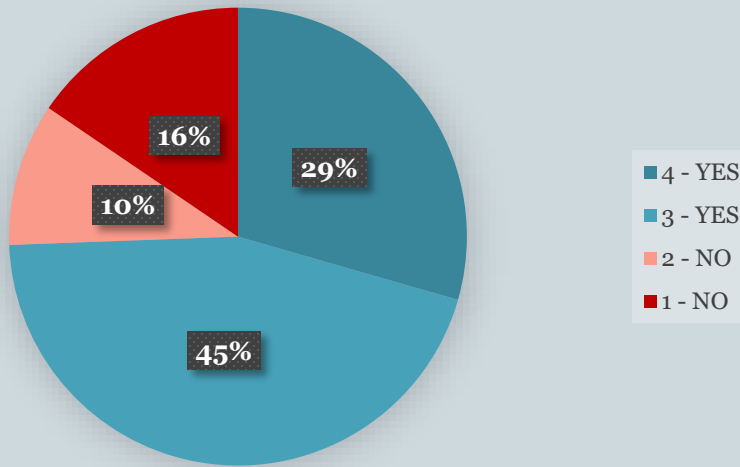
- When you do something good students reward you for it.
- Helps to identify possible further innovation.
- Benefits students who normally find direct interaction with convenor a challenge.



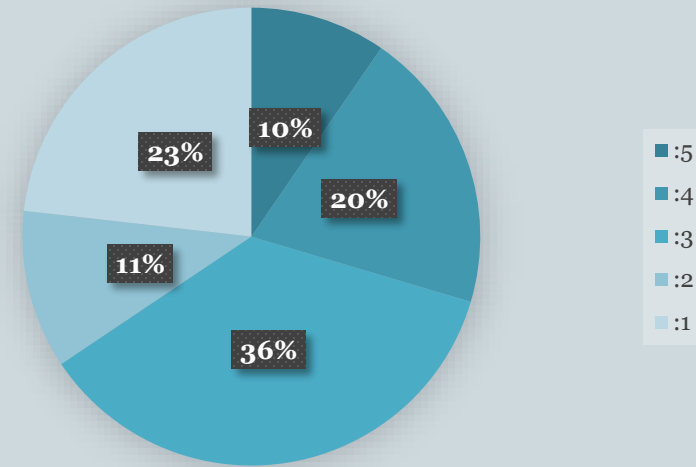
Survey evidence

ECON20401 2013/14

Do you have a twitter account?



Question 2



Q1: Do you have a twitter account?

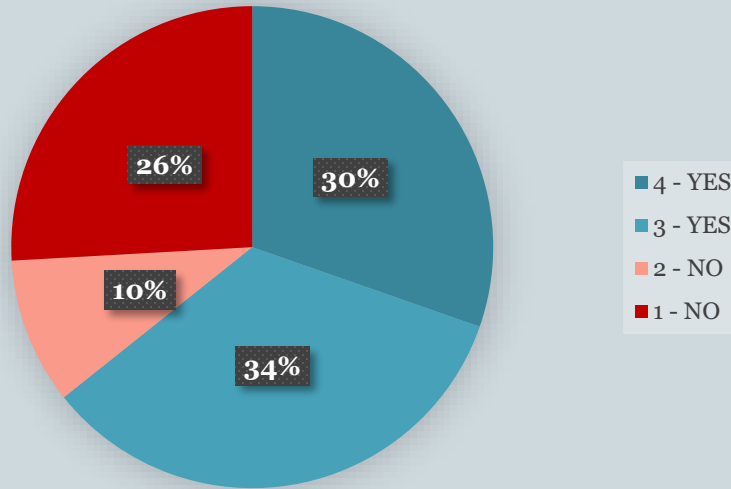
Q2: Using twitter on this course has increased my participation and engagement.

(5 agree – 1 disagree)

Survey evidence

ECON10042 2013/14

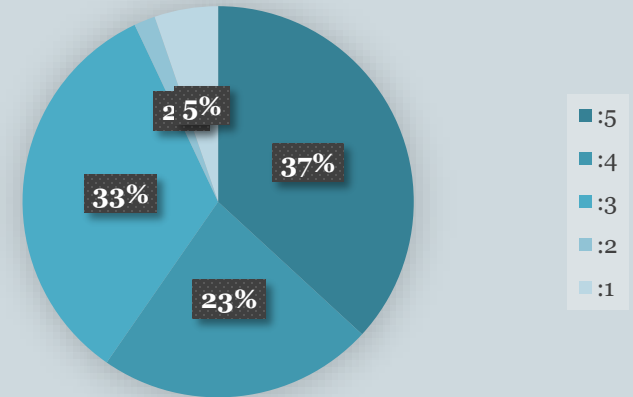
Do you have a twitter account?



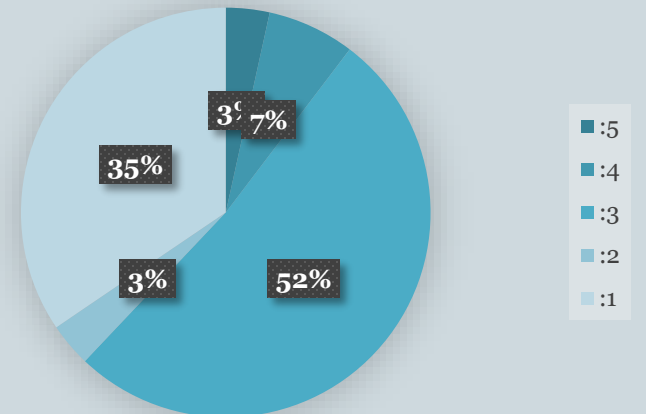
Q1: Do you have a twitter account?

Q2: The use of twitter on this module has made the course more engaging
(5 agree – 1 disagree)

Q2: Yes to Question 1



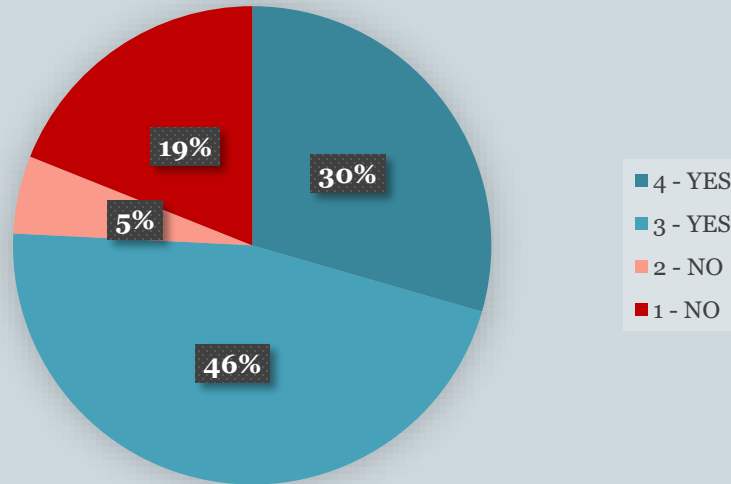
Q2: No to Question 1



Survey evidence

ECON20401 2014/15

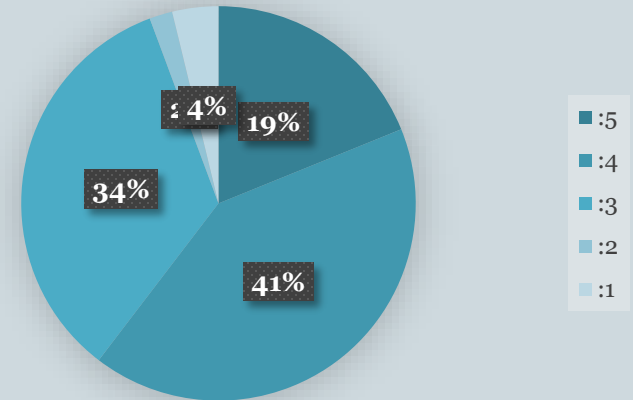
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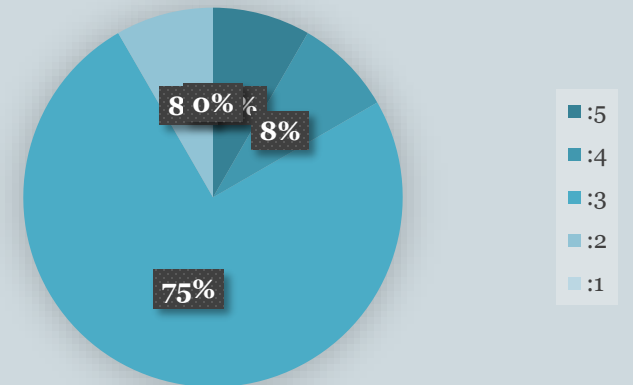
Q1: Do you have a twitter account?

Q2: The use of twitter on this module has made the course more engaging
(5 agree – 1 disagree)

Q2: Yes to Question 1



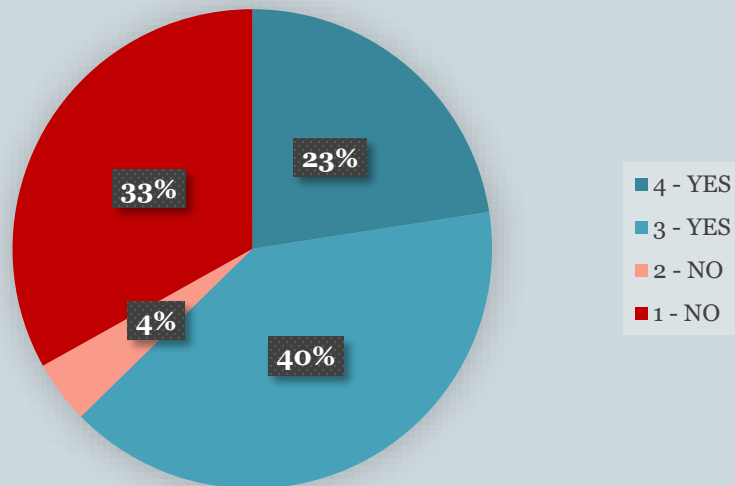
Q2: No to Question 1



Survey evidence

ECON10042 2014/15

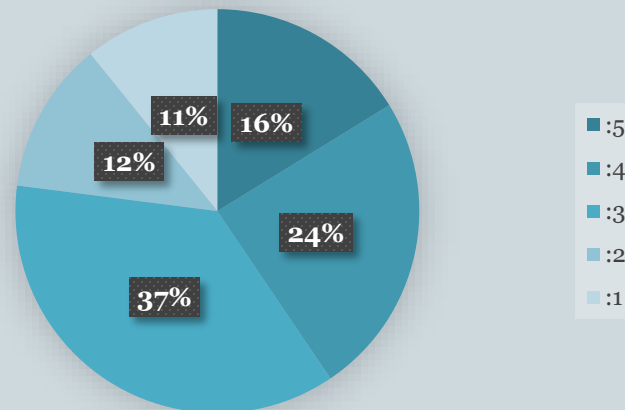
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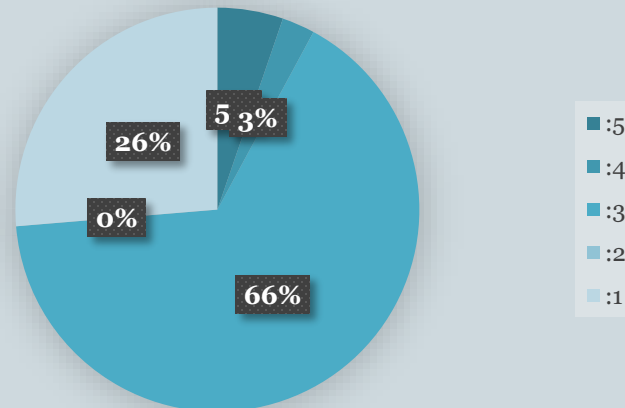
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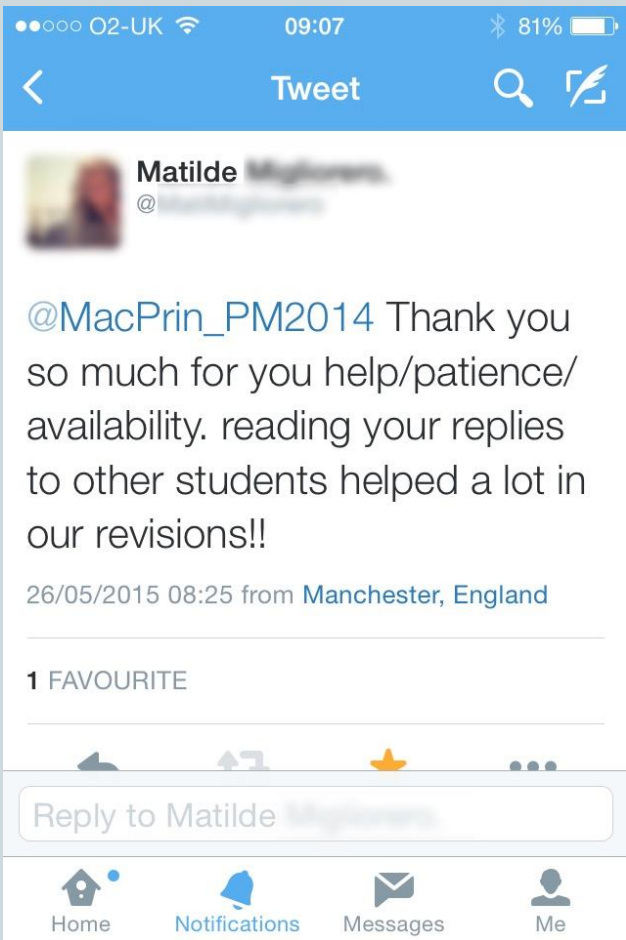
Q2: Yes to Question 1



Q2: No to Question 1



Tweets during the revision period



09:07 81% battery

Matilde *Highways*
@matildemcpherson

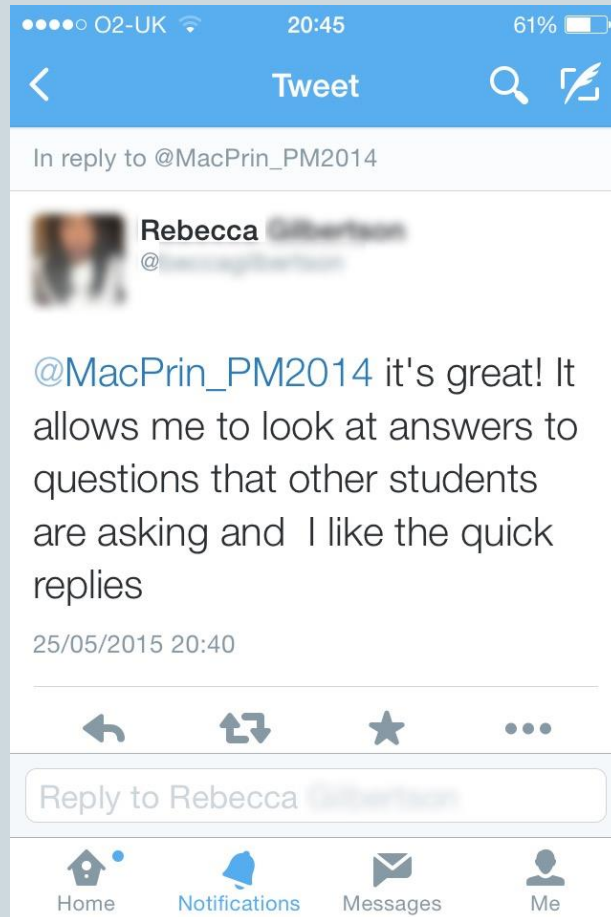
@MacPrin_PM2014 Thank you so much for your help/patience/availability. Reading your replies to other students helped a lot in our revisions!!

26/05/2015 08:25 from Manchester, England

1 FAVOURITE

Reply to Matilde *Highways*

Home Notifications Messages Me



20:45 61% battery

In reply to @MacPrin_PM2014

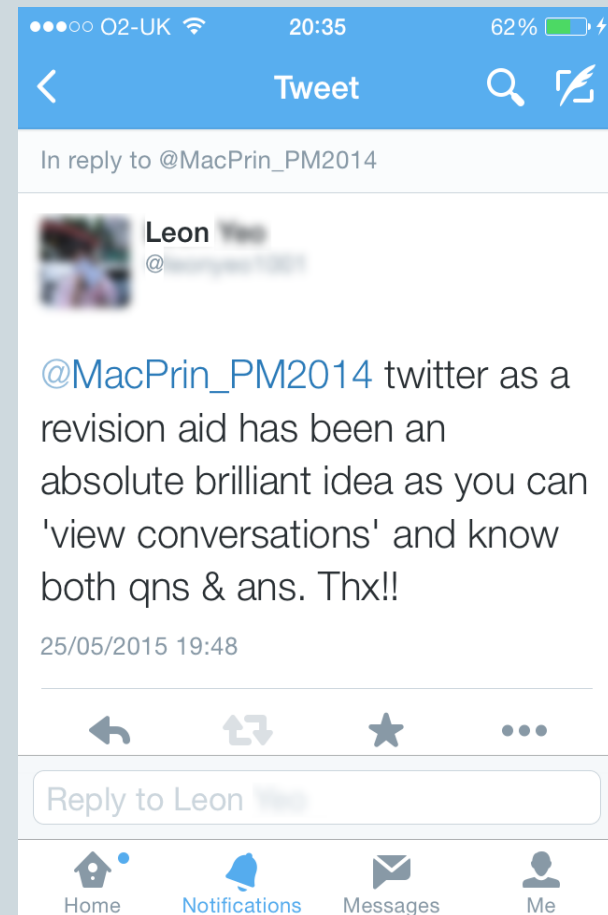
Rebecca *Highways*
@rebeccahighways

@MacPrin_PM2014 it's great! It allows me to look at answers to questions that other students are asking and I like the quick replies

25/05/2015 20:40

Reply to Rebecca *Highways*

Home Notifications Messages Me



20:35 62% battery

In reply to @MacPrin_PM2014

Leon *Highways*
@leonhighways

@MacPrin_PM2014 twitter as a revision aid has been an absolute brilliant idea as you can 'view conversations' and know both qns & ans. Thx!!

25/05/2015 19:48

Reply to Leon *Highways*

Home Notifications Messages Me

Open comments on the OEQ

'...very engaging with the students and creative. He was the only lecturer who used Twitter so efficiently and the introduction of the interaction lectures were by far the greatest motivation for me to come to lectures...'

I don't use twitter myself but I think the social media aspect of the course makes it even more accessible.

The lectures were interactive as well with the polling system. He also made use of social media through twitter to keep in touch with students making it more informal.

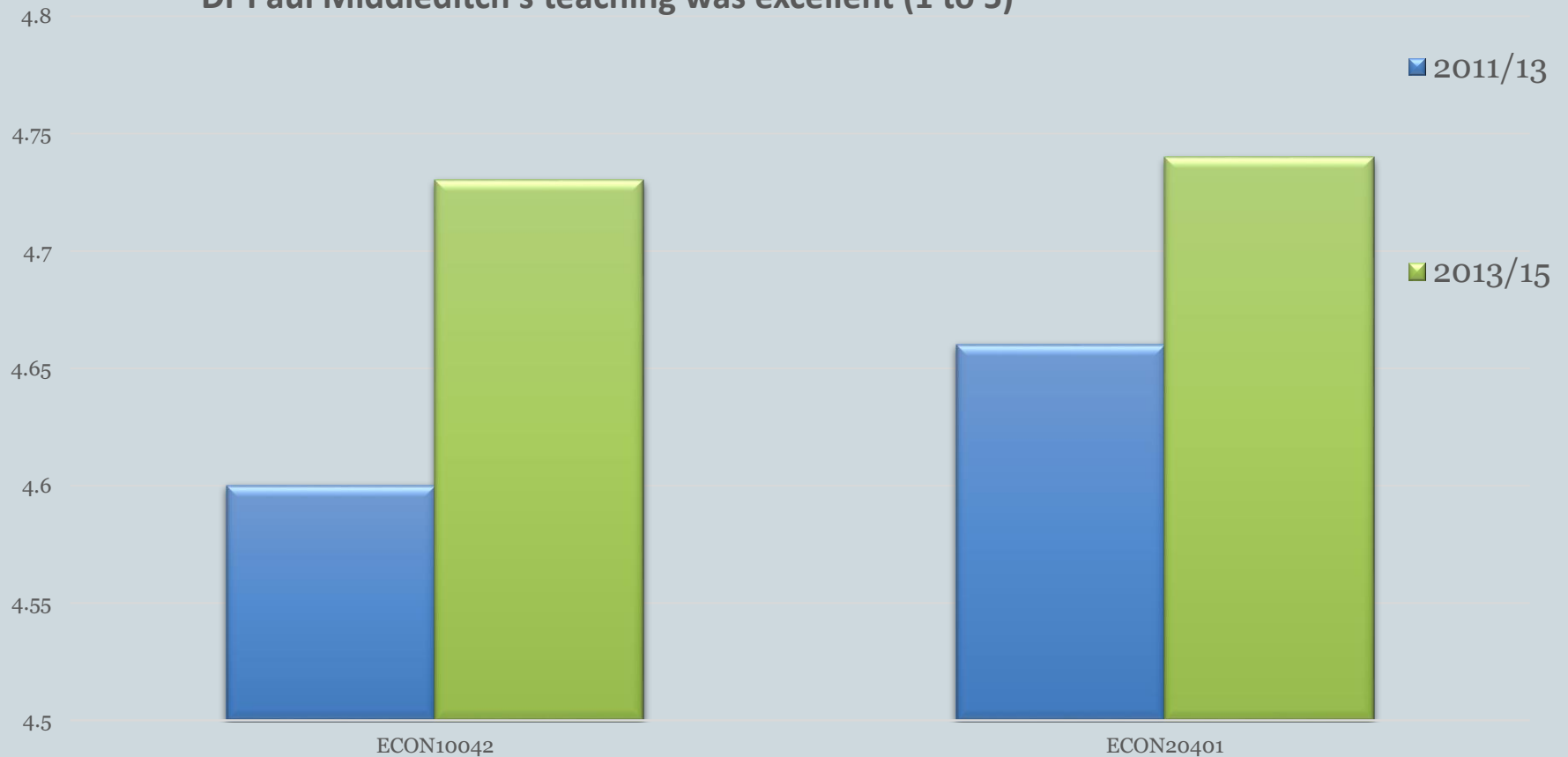
The twitter was also brilliant especially for clearer understanding. I did not have to personally ask any questions through twitter, as reading all the tweets from other students automatically answered all my queries and using the hashtag made finding tweet related to macro3a easy and painless.

Covered all material. Twitter interaction very useful

Average scores for OEQs

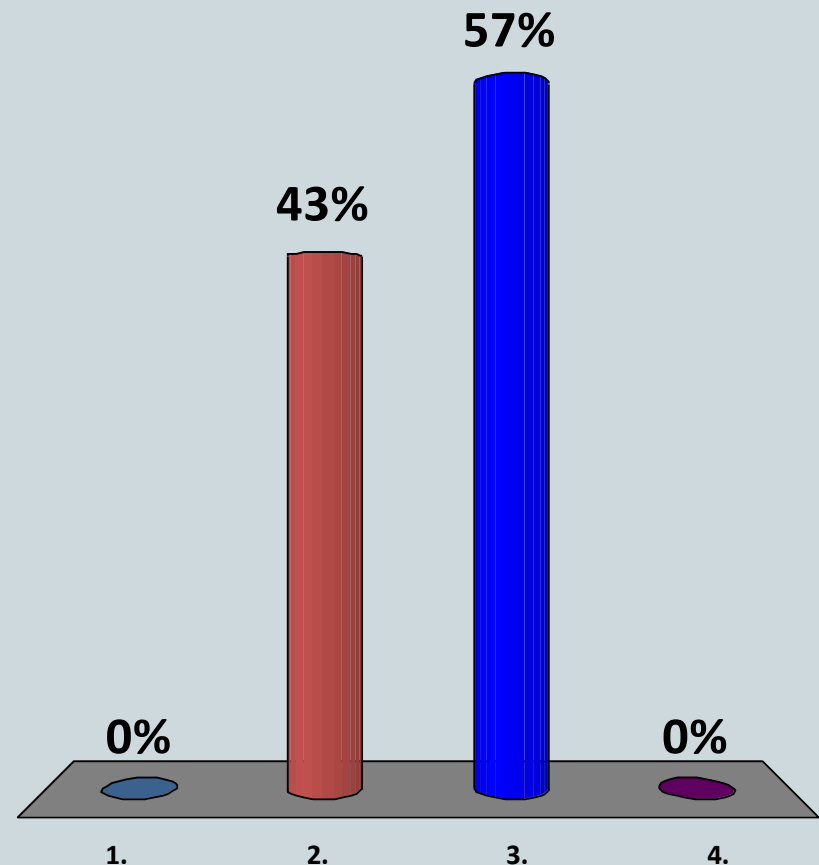
2011/13 vs 2013/15

Dr Paul Middleditch's teaching was excellent (1 to 5)

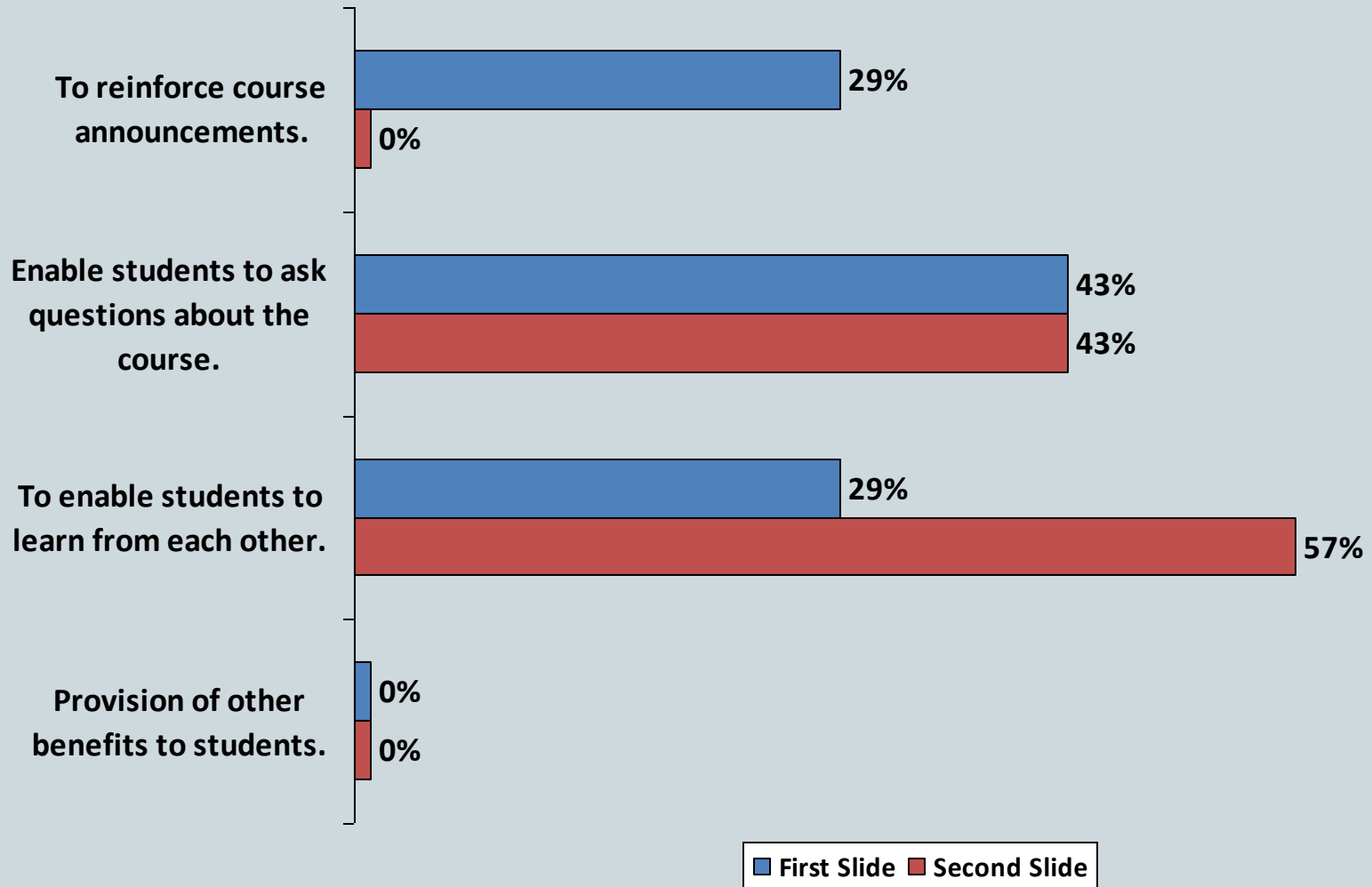


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Which use of twitter do you see as being of most value?



Key findings

1. From the last academic year we approximate that between 63-76% of students have twitter accounts.
2. The survey evidence for twitter as a tool of engagement is largely mixed, though students who disagree are in the minority 6-21%.
3. For students without twitter accounts there is evidence that this tool is still seen as useful, surprisingly.
4. For students with previous experience of twitter use the score for engagement increases.
5. From individual tweets during the revision period there is evidence that use of twitter is popular, reflected further in the course OEQs scores and open comments.

Recommendations for first use in teaching

- Use twitter as an 'optional' extension of the learning environment rather than a replacement for an existing communication channel.
- A tentative approach may be more suitable. The level of student use will reflect your own.
- Follow back your students if you want to enable private tweets (PVTs) - reduction in repeat emails!
- To encourage public interaction refrain from 'shooting down'
- Use it to reinforce but not to replace announcements through campus solutions.

Further recommendations

- Use individual course accounts rather than one personal one for all courses (intranet feel and safeguarding).
- There is no need to maintain a personal/general account. (Recently closed @DrMiddleditch)
- Retweet all student interaction to encourage activity on the account.
- Re-inforce course material by commenting on current affairs/news as a neutral observer to add value.
- Account is most useful as a revision tool, so you may want to prepare for this in the run up to the exam.

The bigger picture.....

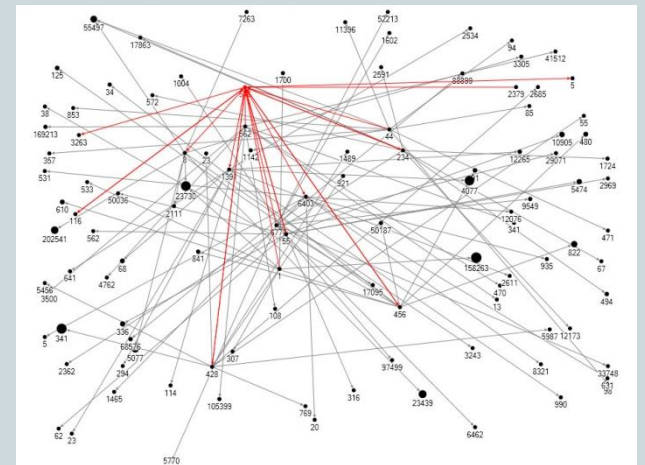
Twitter extends our work on the learning environment for large cohorts:

- 1) TurningPoint Responseware
- 2) Twitter
- 3) Electronic Office Hours



Future areas of interest....

- Exploration of 'NodeXL' - Open-source excel templates that map network graphs of Social Media interactions
- The type of tool that could be useful in better depicting how today's students interact through social media



Further information and contacts

Finally, why not visit the courses taught in Economics at Manchester to see it in practice (2014/15):

@MacPrin_PM2014 and @PaulM_Mac3A14

- If you have any further questions and also any suggestions for this project then we would very much like to hear from you; please contact...

Will: william.moindrot@lstmed.ac.uk
Educational Technologist
Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, UK.

Paul: paul.middleditch@manchester.ac.uk
Senior Lecturer in Macroeconomics
University of Manchester, UK.