

Web-based program for nursing education a big hit with students

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Nursing students Emilie Vinnes and Malin Theissen at the UiS can well understand why the e-compedia are so popular. "They help us to work more purposefully, and we can access them at all times via a computer, an iPad or a mobile phone," says Vinnes. Credit: Asbjørn Jensen

An innovative study tool adopted by the University of Stavanger (UiS) in 2009 as part of Norway's first web-based programme for nursing education has proved a big hit with students.

"This e-compendium solution was also unique internationally when we launched it," reports Atle Løkken, head of the NettOp department for web-based learning at the UiS.

The electronic compendia represented a completely new educational concept when they were developed by NettOp as a combination of PDF and Flash technology.

E-learning has expanded in higher education during recent years, with a number of new digital tools developed to give students access to the curriculum at any time and anywhere.

A survey of UiS nursing students now shows a big preference for e-compendia over both traditional learning aids and other electronic-supported solutions – with textbooks the least popular.

The study has been carried out by associate professor Brynjar Foss in the department of health studies, who was the first member of the UiS teaching staff involved in developing the e-compendia.

After several years of using them as one of several educational tools, he wanted to find out more about their impact. And the survey has clearly confirmed their popularity.

Ranked by satisfaction

Foss asked 349 nursing students who had their first term at the UiS in 2009, 2010 and 2012 to rank various teaching aids by how much they were satisfied with them.

The e-compedia scored far higher than many of the other options. No less than 85 per cent of respondents found them very good, with a further 14 per cent rating them as good.

Lectures were the next most popular educational tool, followed by multi-choice tests, group assignments and podcasts on the university's iTunes U solution.

"The large proportion of students giving e-compedia the highest score is stable across several years," says Foss. "But the 2010 and 2012 entrants are the most enthusiastic".

"They were among the first students in Norway who had the opportunity to make daily use of computers at further education college, so that may play a role here."

Surprising result for podcasts

At the same time, Foss is rather surprised that podcasting failed to come out right at the top alongside e-compedia in his study.

"About 30 per cent of the students made no use of this tool. Nor was this option available to the 2009 entrants, so the sample was somewhat smaller".

"One explanation could be that the podcasts, which can be downloaded to computers or mobile phones, comprise the same audio files already found in the e-compedia."

He is less surprised over the tools which received the lowest scores – namely assignment seminars, discussion fora and textbooks.

"It's difficult to determine whether the e-compedia improve learning,

but they certainly rank as the tool which the students themselves are most satisfied with."

He nevertheless recommends that [students](#) should not rely exclusively on these electronic aids, but supplement them with other learning tools.

Clear advantages

Second-year UiS [nursing students](#) Malin Theissen and Emilie Vinnes are enthusiastic about the e-compedia, and say that their advantages are clear.

"They concentrate more precisely on what we're supposed to learn," explains Vinnes. "We work more purposefully, and can see and hear our lessons sitting on the bus or anywhere. We don't have to drag heavy books around, but have access via a computer, an iPad or a mobile phone."

She and Theissen are not surprised that the e-compedia came out top in the survey.

"They give you a different feel for what you're learning," says Theissen. "They're very visual and easy to use. We employ them every day."

More information: Read the complete study:
www.eurodl.org/?article=568

Provided by University of Stavanger

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