

Introduction

The University of Northampton has over 12,000 undergraduate and nearly 3,000 postgraduate students studying in a broad range of disciplines. For a number of years, students have been able to access in-house, Learning Development produced, online resources to support their studies. The range of resources has grown amorphously over the years with resources available via the virtual learning environment (VLE) and the Skills Hub¹, a website based on a blogging platform.

The decision was taken to streamline the provision of online resources and from August 2018, all online resources have been consolidated on the Skills Hub², giving a single point of access.

Prior to the reorganisation, a review was undertaken of student use of the online resources supporting academic and study skills provided by the Learning Development team. Data from August 2017 – July 2018 was examined.

Aims and Objectives

The aim of the review was to answer the questions:

- How well were the resources used by students?
- Which resources were most popular with students?

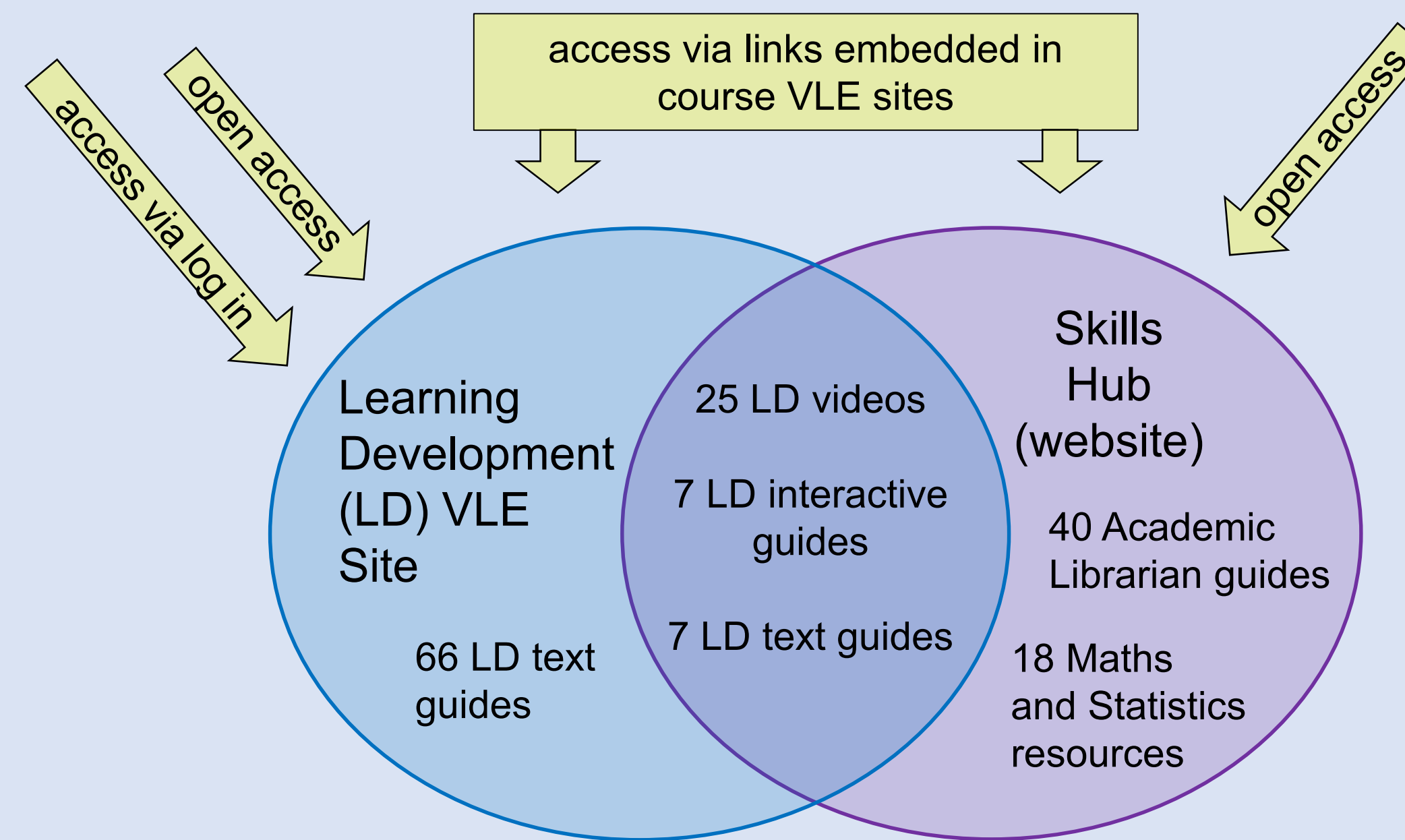
The results also provide a benchmark for comparison with usage of the reorganised Skills Hub going forward.

Data Collection

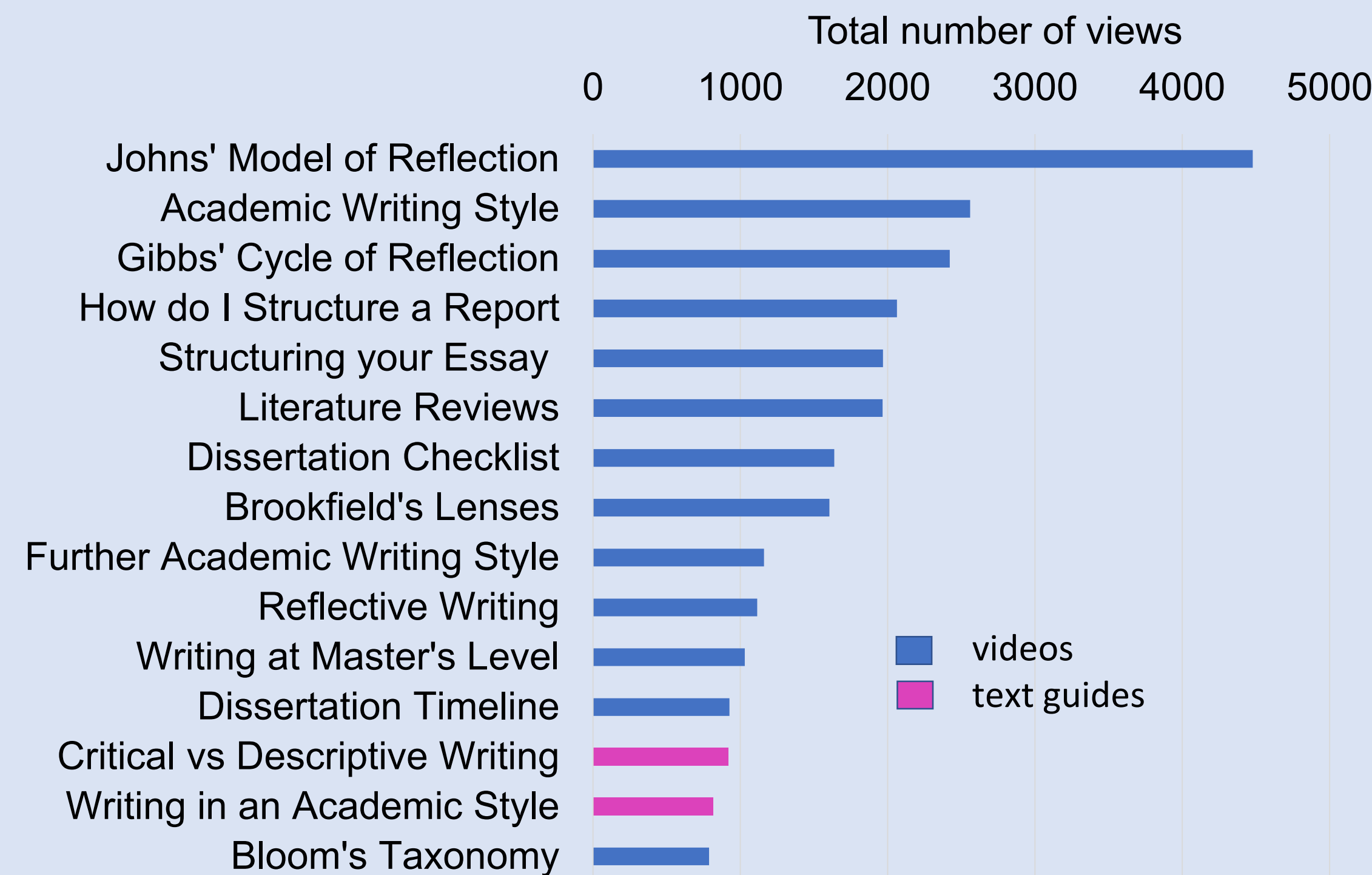
Data for the VLE site were collected from the VLE directly and from Google Analytics. Data for the Skills Hub were collected from WordPress statistics.

Accurate data collection was difficult as a number of resources were available via both platforms leading to possible double counting. The figures presented represent the best estimate of usage for the time period investigated. The problems with finding reliable data have led to an increased focus on data collection going forward, which will allow online resources to be targeted at students' needs.

Access to Online Resources 2017/18



The Most Popular Resources 2017/18



References:

1. House, J. and Dimmock, G. (2015) Research into practice: evaluation of Skills Hub content and implications for library staff development in the creation of video OERs. *Enhancing the Learner Experience in Higher Education*. 7(1), pp. 29-45.
2. <https://skillshub.northampton.ac.uk>
3. Loddick, A. and Coulson, K. V. (n.d.) *The impact of learning development tutorials on student attainment*. Unpublished.

Key Findings

- The Learning Development VLE site was accessed directly 12,700 times over the academic year.
- The Skills Hub Learning Development academic / study skills resources were accessed over 25,000 times over the academic year.
- It is estimated that Learning Development resources were accessed via embedded links in course sites in up to 50% of cases.
- The total number of views for individual resources ranged from five to 4500, with the average (median) number of views being 240.
- 13 of the 15 most popular resources were videos.
- An estimated three times as many students used the Learning Development online resources as were seen in one-to-one tutorials.
- Assuming 9% of students had tutorials³, online resources reached nearly 30% of students.

The Future

At the end of the academic year 2018/19, using data from the reorganised Skills Hub, it is hoped to be able to answer the following questions:

- Will locating all resources together on the Skills Hub reach more students?
- Will locating all resources together on the Skills Hub remove the apparent student preference for videos?
- What proportion of access to resources is via the Skills Hub and what proportion is via links embedded in course VLE sites?
- Are videos watched in their entirety or is there a significant drop off?