

Online Student Engagement: Reports from learnonline

In an online class you don't receive feedback from your students in the same way that you do in a face-to-face class, so how can you tell whether your students are engaged – and what can you do if they're not?

Accessing and analysing data is incredibly important to the success of an online course! It can help you to identify students who are falling behind and provide them with mechanisms to get back on track.

This *Guide* focuses on several engagement analytics reports that reflect student behaviour in learn**online** and discusses how they may be used.

It is the second in the series of *Guides* on using learning analytics.

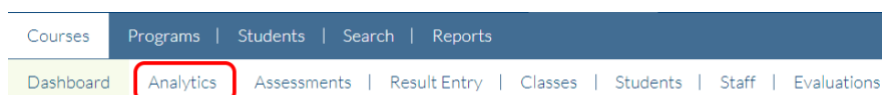
[The first Guide](#) in the series provided

- an overview of the analytic reports that are automatically available
- focused on how to access the reports via the Dashboard and
- discussed some issues related to interpreting student engagement data.

Subsequent *Guides* will look at analytic reports from other systems (e.g. Panopto, and eReserve) and individual student engagement across multiple courses.

Course Analytics Reports from learnonline

The detailed reports from learn**online** course site use will be found under the *Analytics* tab.

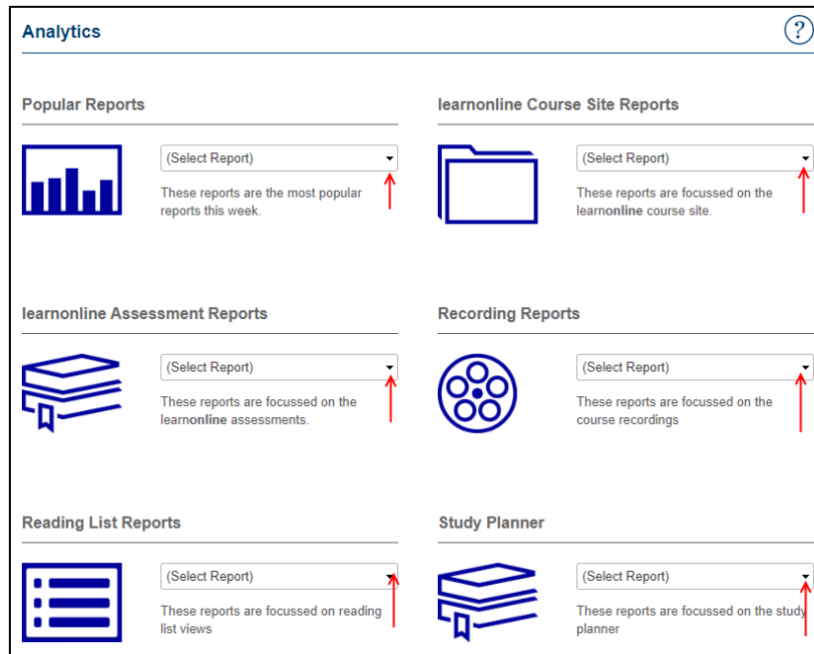


- Help resource – [Analytics tab](#)

The reports are arranged into categories:

1. Popular Reports
2. learn**online** Course Site Reports
3. learn**online** Assessment Reports

4. Lecture Recording Reports
5. Reading List Reports



Click the drop-down arrow in each category to select the required report. These reports are refreshed every 24hrs with data from **learnonline**. The **question mark icon** is used throughout the analytics reports and provides further information about each section.

Popular Reports

Clicking the drop-down arrow for this category lists the most popular reports for the week. Different reports are displayed depending on where you are in the Study Period. For example, at the beginning of the Study Period most academics are interested in the report on first time logins. Toward the end of the Study Period the topic of interest may be the report on their Course Evaluation Response Rate or the report on their Course Grade Distribution. Visit this section regularly to stay abreast with the important data sets from your course.

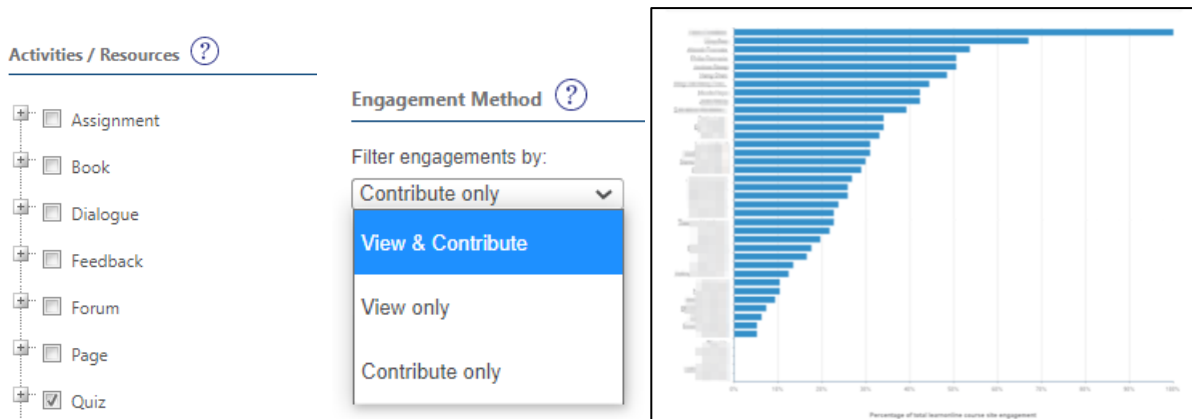
learnonline Course Site Reports

- Help resource – [Student course site visits \(First time Login\)](#)

However, this report can raise more questions than it answers. Why exactly, for example, does late arrival pose such a risk? Will it correlate with their overall grades? Is late arrival a problem that is best tackled at the program level? Keep these in mind as you analyse student engagement in your courses.

Student learnonline engagement report illustrates the average student activity engagement per student within the course offering. This can be useful for a Course Coordinator to identify students that are not engaged in the **learnonline** course site.

You can use filters to focus in on specific areas in this report by selecting the activity and engagement method. For example, by selecting only the data from the quiz, and changing the **Engagement Method** to 'view and contribute', you can identify those students who struggle (they don't engage much or at all), but it doesn't give you much sense about the successful students. Perhaps it would, if 'contribute' was the filter rather than 'view and contribute'.



In a similar way, this report can be tailored to show **Forum engagement**, using the Engagement Method filter to be **Contribute only**. Forum contributions have been well correlated with the upper end of student results and can be used to identify 'champion' students early and establish forums around them (as one of many options).

- **learnonline** help – [Student learnonline Engagement](#)

It is important to remember that these reports are only telling us part of the picture. If you are finding that, for example, quiz engagement was a persistent problem, then do not just blame the students, but also question the current learning design. For example, you could investigate if quiz participation is correlated with final grades. This can be undertaken on a question by question basis, using the approach documented at the [Carnegie Mellon Datalab](#). If there is a strong correlation, then let the students know. If it is weak, then question the need for the quiz at all! Alternatively, you could swap to a more engaging teaching method such as [Team-based Learning \(TBL\)](#) or [Mazur's Peer Learning](#) approach to counteract an overall lack of engagement.

Using Student Engagement Data

Student interactions within **learnonline** are used as a proxy for engagement. When viewing student engagement data, it is important to consider the many ways that students may engage with **learnonline**, for example, reading a document online compared to downloading the document and reading offline.

Consult the first Guide in this series *Online Student Engagement: An Overview* to review use of student engagement data reports including:

- engagement data is useful as a guide and not as a measure of academic success.
- student-generated data, although potentially rich, is incomplete
- reports don't consider how students are engaging with their learning outside of **learnonline**.
- the collected data is not specifically contextualized for your course, student cohort, your teaching approach or disciplinary cognitive development.
- that you critically review the data reports for your course.
- that reports contain sensitive information as referenced by *Policy A-46.12 Confidentiality of students' personal information*.

If you would like to ask online teaching and learning questions related to your course, you can look through our [FAQs](#), write to TIU@unisa.edu.au, have an [online consultation with a member of the TIU](#) or complete the online modules as part of [Introduction to Engaging Learners Online](#).

References

Carnegie Mellon University 2016, Datalab,
<<https://www.cmu.edu/datalab/>> (Accessed 21 July 2020)

Clark *et al.*, 2018, 'Off to On: Best Practices for Online Team-Based Learning™', White paper presented at the *Team-Based Learning™ Collaborative Conference*, San Diego, CA, pp. 1-36, viewed 21 July 2020, <http://www.teambasedlearning.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Off-to-On_OnlineTBL_WhitePaper_ClarkEtal2018_V3.pdf>.

Serious Science 2014, *Peer Instruction for Active Learning – Eric Mazur*, video, YouTube, 18 June 2014, viewed 20 July 2020, <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z9orbxoRofI>>.

University of South Australia 2020, *Policy No: A-46.12 Confidentiality of students' personal information*, University of South Australia, viewed 15 July 2020, <<https://i.unisa.edu.au/siteassets/policies-and-procedures/docs/academic/a-46-confidentiality-of-students.pdf>>.