

Learner Analytics Code of Practice

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LEARNER ANALYTICS CODE OF PRACTICE

1. Introduction

Learner analytics is defined by Jisc as the ‘use of data about students and their activities to help institutions understand and improve educational processes, and provide better support to learners’. The adoption of learner analytics across Teesside University is intended to strengthen and enhance the support provided to students through ensuring it is delivered with targeted precision and underpinned by robust data.

The use of learner analytics to process and expose data will enable Teesside University to develop further insights into the student experience and optimise organisational processes and outputs, delivering upon our commitment to the student experience.

The introduction of learner analytics, will further strengthen partnership working between staff and students, through promoting and underpinning meaningful dialogue based upon a deep understanding and recognition of the totality of student experiences in engaging with the University.

2. Purpose of the Code of Practice

The purpose of the Code of Practice is to define the key principles which will inform the utilisation of learner analytics, ensuring that there is a shared institutional understanding of how analytics will enable greater insight into the student experience.

The development of the Code of Practice directly draws upon the Jisc Code of Practice for Learning Analytics, which outlines the responsibilities of educational institutions in utilising analytics responsibly and effectively.

3. Scope

The Code of Practice is relevant to staff and students engaged in the utilisation of learner analytics across Teesside University. Learner analytics are not currently utilised for students studying through partner institutions due to variances in data sources. StREAM is the learner analytics platform adopted by Teesside University.

4. Key Principles

1. The use of learner analytics is intended to support all students in maximising their chances of success and realising their full potential.
2. The operation of learner analytics will be conducted in partnership between staff and students, with an emphasis upon dialogue and transparency.
3. Through providing access to a range of relevant data sources, learner analytics will form the core of meaningful and high-impact dialogue between Personal Tutors and tutees, and reviewed at each 1-1 meeting.
4. Schools will use the data derived from learner analytics to better support students.
5. Students will independently utilise learner analytics to enhance their own learning.
6. Students and staff will be provided with guidance and support in understanding the legal and ethical parameters of the design and use of learner analytics.
7. Learner analytics will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that they remain fit for purpose, compliant with regulatory changes, and aligned with the needs of the University and the student body.
8. Changes in the design and use of learner analytics will be clearly communicated to staff and students.
9. All staff utilising learner analytics will be provided with high quality professional development on an ongoing basis to ensure that the maximum value is drawn from the system and data.

5. Personal Tutoring

The deployment of learner analytics at Teesside University will underpin Personal Tutoring, ensuring that the guidance and support for individual students is informed by relevant data and analysis. Learner analytics will be discussed during tutorials, encouraging reflection and meaningful actions relating to engagement with learning and related student activities.

Effective use of learner analytics will allow teaching staff to evidence excellence under the Academic Enhancement Framework. The Student Success theme of the Academic Enhancement Framework identifies the following as a key

principle: 'Personal Tutoring enhances the performance, wellbeing and experience of our students, helping to ensure that each student is valued and their respective needs recognised and supported.'

6. Transparency

The University's adoption of learner analytics is underpinned by an institutional commitment to transparency relating to purpose, metrics, access and usage parameters. This includes maintaining transparency in how student data is processed, stored and utilised.

Initially, the following datastreams will be utilised within learner analytics:

- Attendance data drawn from My Attendance
- Physical library loan data
- Swipe card data
- PC log-ins
- VLE log-ins
- MyPrint usage

Over time, the types of data exposed through StREAM may change in order to improve the effectiveness of learner analytics. Such changes will be clearly communicated to staff and students.

Learner analytics sits within the TU secured network infrastructure, and is subject to standard institutional information governance and security protocols.

Where referrals to specialist support are made by Personal Tutors, these will be noted within the dashboard. Students will be made aware of the purpose of the referral and the next steps to be taken. Following a referral, confidential information may be stored in pre-existing University systems. Students may seek independent advice from the Students' Union.

7. Privacy

Access to student data through the learner analytics system will only be provided to staff who have a legitimate reason to do so, for the purposes of supporting students in their studies. For the purposes of ensuring functioning systems and the integrity of data, staff from the solution provider are able to access the data when necessary. The use of student data will comply with relevant University policies and protocols, in alignment with GDPR requirements. Reference should be made to the University's Privacy Notices for Students available on the University website.

Where anonymised data is used for research purposes, the University will ensure that steps are taken to prevent the identification of individuals through the metadata or through aggregating multiple data sources.

In some circumstances, the University may be required to share data and analytics externally (e.g. requests from regulatory bodies or security agencies). Additional consent will be sought where necessary if required.

8. Validity

The University will actively monitor the robustness of learner analytics, and the quality of underpinning data streams, to ensure relevance, reliability and validity as a tool to support learning and enhancement of the student experience. Rigorous testing and review will prevent errors and ensure that the data upon which learner analytics draws is minimised.

9. Access

Through StREAM, students will have the same access to their personal data, including associated commentary, as staff members. Students are encouraged to utilise learner analytics outside of interactions with Personal Tutors as a means of empowering the choices they make around their engagement in learning and the wider student experience.

10. Enabling positive interactions

Where appropriate, learner analytics will inform appropriate positive interventions which maximise the potential for individuals to achieve success and a worthwhile and transformative higher education experience. The purpose and nature of interventions will be clearly articulated to students. Interventions will be auditable in alignment with University expectations. Staff conducting interventions will have received appropriate specialist training to shape their practice.

11. Minimising adverse impacts

It is recognised that learner analytics serves as a tool to inform decision making by staff and students, and should be informed and supplemented by other information concerning the context in which any given individual experiences their learning.

The University will actively work to ensure that trends, norms or categorisations identified through learner analytics do not result in bias, discriminatory attitudes or power differentials. Through robust evaluation, steps will be taken to remedy

any activities which may negatively impact on academic performance, engagement or wellbeing, or adversely impact on analytical reliability.

Whilst learner analytics should inform individual decision making, students maintain appropriate levels of autonomy in the decisions they make around their learning in order to maximise their abilities to reach their potential.

Training and support will be provided for all staff members utilising learner analytics to ensure that they retain a sound understanding of the associated legal and ethical issues.

12. Stewardship of data

The data utilised for learner analytics will comply with existing institutional data policies and protocols, in alignment with GDPR requirements. This includes restricting the use of data to the minimum level required to deliver the purposes of learner analytics and managing data retention for appropriate and clearly defined periods. Students may correct inaccurate personal data held about themselves through the standard institutional process or by exercising their Data Protection rights. For further information about student rights in relation to their personal data, reference should be had to the University's Privacy Notice for Students.

13. Responsibilities and Governance

The operation of learner analytics is coordinated by the Engagement Working Group, consisting of cross-University representatives, and chaired by the Academic Registrar. Oversight of learner analytics is maintained by the Student Learning & Experience Committee, chaired by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching), and ultimately the University Academic Board, chaired by the Vice-Chancellor.

14. Related Documents

- i. Student Attendance and Engagement Policy & Procedure
- ii. Personal Tutoring Code of Practice
- iii. Learner Analytics Operations Manual
- iv. Student Code of Conduct