## Contents

1. Summary ........................................................................................................................................... 2
2. Highlights ........................................................................................................................................ 2
3. Introduction ...................................................................................................................................... 2
4. Demographic Profile of Students ..................................................................................................... 3
5. Devices ............................................................................................................................................. 4
6. Internet Devices ............................................................................................................................... 6
7. Operating System ............................................................................................................................ 7
8. Mobile Phone Operating System ..................................................................................................... 8
9. Online Storage Services .................................................................................................................. 9
10. Anti-virus Software ........................................................................................................................ 10
11. Social Media ................................................................................................................................... 11
12. University Followers ...................................................................................................................... 15
13. Virtual Learning Environments .................................................................................................... 16
14. Expectations ................................................................................................................................... 17
15. Comments, queries and suggestions .............................................................................................. 19
1 Summary
IT Services, and OUCS before it, has run a survey at Freshers’ Fair since 2004. The aim is to capture the prior experiences, and more recently, opinions and wishes, of freshers to inform IT Services’ strategy, focus and resources. The survey also provides a wealth of data for divisions and others to use as they see fit, for example, to explore the support requirements for students or assess what proportion would own the appropriate technology to access facilities divisions or colleges might provide.

2 Highlights
67% of respondents brought a hybrid computer, 21% brought iPads and 10% brought other tablets.

77% of respondents have a tablet, either a stand-alone device or as part of a hybrid computer.

The majority of respondents (46%) brought 2 internet enabled devices with the average being 2.8; the same as 2015.

The number of respondents using Windows OS has continued to decrease and is now 55%.

MPLS students are more likely to use Unix or Linux computers than respondents from other divisions (brought by 21% of MPLS respondents compared to 7% overall).

The percentage of respondents with Android smartphone is 45% and increasing. Smartphones with iOS are used by 48% but this has decreased since 2015.

90% of respondents use an external storage services. Google Drive is the most popular, used by 61% of respondents with Dropbox second on 53%.

27% of respondents don’t have, or don’t know if they have, anti-virus software. This continues to increase.

Facebook, YouTube and WhatsApp are the most popular social media channels but there are significant difference by student type and by division. More than four times as many taught postgraduates use LinkedIn than undergraduates, for example.

While 65% of respondents use YouTube, only 8% follow the University’s YouTube channel.

88% of respondents have used a VLE previously.

3 Introduction
The data for the Freshers’ Survey is gathered at the annual Freshers’ Fair organised by the Oxford University Student Union in the Examination Schools. IT Services run a stand to publicise our services to new students and we also invite students to complete a short survey. This year, due to various technical issues, our capacity to capture survey responses was reduced and we had three laptops available rather than 8-10 available in previous years.
Students are encouraged to complete the online survey as they go past the IT Services stand and all who do so are entered into a prize draw to win £100 as an incentive. The 2016 Freshers’ Survey was completed by over 459 people (last year, with more laptops, 815 usable responses were collected). A valid University barcode was required only to enable us to contact the prize winner and not needed to complete the survey.

The survey has been growing for many years and, while some long-standing questions are still yielding interesting and useful results, others are not. For example, the percentage of respondents bringing laptops has been over 90% since 2009. Knowing that it went up from 95% in 2016 (from 94% in 2015 and 93% in 2014) does not give any particularly revealing insights. With this in mind, in consultation with IT Services Senior Management Team and other stakeholders and as indicated in the 2015 Freshers’ Survey Report, the questions in the 2016 survey were significantly reduced with some being cut and a few new, focussed questions added.

4 Demographic Profile of Students
Over half (51%) of respondents were undergraduates with 32% being taught postgraduates and 16% research postgraduates (Figure 1). This is a decrease in the percentage of undergraduates and an increase in taught postgraduates, continuing a trend first seen last year (Figure 2).

![Figure 1 Respondents by student type](image1)

![Figure 2 Respondents by student type over time](image2)

When looking at the split by divisions, there has been a sustained increase in the percentage of respondents from Medical Sciences (Figure 4, green line) from 8% in 2014 to 13% in 2016 but this year sees a decrease in the percentage of respondents from Maths, Physical and Life Sciences (MPLS) from 38% to 32% (Figure 4, red line).
The survey asked *Which of these devices did you bring to Oxford?* with the options *iPad, other tablet, laptop/tablet hybrid, smart watch or none of these.* Where appropriate, examples were given of what was meant by each term, e.g. *Lenovo Yoga, Surface Book* for laptop/tablet hybrid. This was a new question; we have a good idea about the popularity of laptops and desktops, so this question was to find out more about tablet use amongst freshers. The survey has asked about tablet ownership before but it is the first time laptop/tablet hybrids have been included as a separate item.

As shown in Figure 1, 67% of respondents brought a hybrid computer, 21% brought iPads and 10% brought other tablets. Just 3% brought a smart watch, similar to 2% in 2015. All smartwatch owners also brought a tablet or hybrid computer. Some respondents brought more than one of these, just over 20%, while 23% brought none.

### Devices

![Figure 3 Respondents by division](image)

![Figure 4 Respondents by division over time](image)

![Figure 1 Percentage of respondents bringing each type of device](image)
Looking at the change in iPad or other tablets over time (Figure 2), there is a steady increase in both iPad and other tablet ownership with iPads brought by roughly twice as many respondents.

![Figure 2 Percentage of respondents bringing different sorts of tablets over time](image)

Combining figures, 77% of respondents have a tablet, either a stand-alone device or as part of a hybrid computer.

Analysing the data by student type shows that undergraduates (blue bars) have more hybrid computers (73% compared to 61% for taught postgraduates and 59% for research postgraduates) and are less likely to have none of the devices mentioned (21% compared to 23% for taught postgraduates and 26% for research postgraduates). See Figure 3.

![Figure 3 Percentage of respondents bringing each type of device by student group](image)

Respondents from Medical Science (green bars, Figure 4) are most likely to have hybrid computers and only 10% of Medical Science respondents brought none of these devices. 27% of Humanities students did not bring any of these devices; this still means that 73% of Humanities students have
either a stand-alone tablet or one as part of a hybrid computer (all people with smartwatches also brought at least one of the other devices).

**Figure 4 Percentage of respondents bringing each type of device by division**

NOTE: The terms “2 in 1”, “2 in 1 laptop” and “convertible laptop” are also used to describe a laptop which can also function as a tablet.

**6 Internet Devices**

This question, introduced in 2015, asked how many devices respondents had which could use wired or wireless connections (wifi) and how many could only use wifi. The majority of respondents (46%) brought 2 internet enabled devices with the average being 2.8, the same as 2015.

**Figure 5 Percentage of respondents bringing each quantity of devices**

The percentages of respondents bringing each quantity of wired+wifi or wifi only devices was also the same in 2016 as 2015.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>wifi+wired</th>
<th>wifi</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7 Operating System

The survey asked *What computer operating system(s) do you mostly use on your own laptop or desktop computer?* and respondents were asked to include laptop/tablet hybrids but not other tablets. Previously the question had been phrased as *What computer operating system(s) do you mostly use?* which is more vague and there had been uncertainties in previous years whether people were including tablets as their “computer” which would have affected the results. It was decided to use the trend data from previous years but bear this change in mind when considering the results.

As can be seen in Figure 6, the percentage of respondents using Android as a computer OS has dropped significantly, from 28% in 2015 to 3% in 2016 (purple line). This could be attributable to respondents previously recording the OS of their tablet, however only 10% of 2016 respondents brought “other tablets” ie not iPads, so this cannot account for the whole decrease. Note, Android as a phone OS is discussed in section 8.

Mac OS (red line) has also decreased, from 45% to 39%. As 21% of respondents brought an iPad, this may be a result of the question explicitly ruling out tablets or may be a decrease in the number of Mac computers brought.

![Figure 6 Percentage of respondents using each OS over time](image)

The number of respondents using Windows OS (blue line) has continued to decrease, now 55%. This may be surprising given that most hybrid computers run Windows OS. Figure 7 may go some way to explain this; the percentage of undergraduates using Windows (blue line, diamond marker) is
increasing while the percentages of postgraduates using it is decreasing. As discussed in Devices above, undergraduates are more likely to have brought hybrid computers.

The percentages of respondents using Chrome (green line) and using Unix/Linux (yellow line) have remained constant.

![Figure 7 Percentage of respondents using each OS over time by student type](image)

Figure 7 also shows that more research postgraduates bring Unix or Linux computers than the other two groups (yellow line, triangle markers), and this is increasing, and that taught postgraduates brought most Chrome computers (green line, square marker) and this is also increasing. Figures for Android have been removed from this graph for clarity. All showed the same decrease as seen in Figure 6.

Analysis by division showed a very similar pattern. MPLS students are more likely to use Unix or Linux computers (brought by 21% of MPLS respondents compared to 7% overall).

8 Mobile Phone Operating System

The percentage of respondents with smartphones running Android continues to slowly increase, from 43% in 2015 to 45% in 2016 (Figure 8, red line). iOS is still used by a higher percentage of respondents (48%, blue line) but has decreased since 2015. In 2016, only 2% of respondents did not have a smart phone.
9 Online Storage Services

This question asked *What kind of online storage services do you use?* e.g. for storage, sharing, syncing, backup. The options were *Apple iCloud Drive, Amazon Cloud Drive, Box, Dropbox, Google Docs, One Drive* and *Other*. As with all similar survey questions, respondents could tick more than one option.

Google Drive is the most popular storage service, used by 61% of respondents. DropBox is second on 53% (see Figure 9). This is an increase for Google Drive and a similarly small fall for DropBox from 2015 (see Figure 10). Amazon, Box: and Other are not shown on the chart as they are all steady on less than 5%. Only 10% of respondents said they did not use online storage services.
10 Anti-virus Software

This year, the survey just asked about whether people had anti-virus (AV) software or not and did not ask what type they used. Previous results have shown that the arena is fairly evenly split between 6-8 vendors.

The majority of respondents (71%) do use AV software however this is a decrease since 2015 (79%) and continues the downward trend in AV software deployment. Figure 11 shows the percentage of respondents who either don’t know if they use AV software and those who say they do not use it. In 2016, 27% of respondents did not have, or did not know if they had, anti-virus software installed on their computer. This is increasing and has been since 2011. The trend holds across all student types and all divisions.
Social Media

Respondents were asked *Which social networks do you regularly use?* and offered the choices of:

- Facebook
- Google+
- Instagram
- LinkedIn
- Pinterest
- Snapchat
- Tumblr
- Twitter
- Vine
- WhatsApp
- YouTube
- None
- Other (please specify)

The results and trends for the last few years are shown in Figure 12

*Figure 12 Percentage of respondents who regularly use each social media channel over time*

The most popular social media channel is clearly Facebook (dark blue line). Over 90% of respondents use it, a figure which has varied little since 2012. YouTube and WhatsApp are also popular with 65% and 57% of respondents using them respectively; their use has also increased since 2015, the first year they were included in the question. Instagram (turquoise line) is also increasing in popularity, as
LinkedIn (orange line) although the percentage of respondents using them is lower (36% and 25% respectively).

In previous years', there has been significant differences in the social media channels used by different student types. This is shown in Figure 13. To try and simplify the chart, Facebook (all values between 90% and 95%), Google+ (all values below 10%) and Vine (all values below 5%) have not been included.

Figure 13 Percentage of respondents using each social media channel over time by student type

12
Undergraduates are the main users of YouTube (dark green line, diamond markers) but lowest users of WhatsApp (brown line, diamond markers). WhatsApp use has increased for all groups (brown lines) but the increase for research postgraduates (brown line, triangle markers) is the greatest, from 49% of respondents in 2015 to 68% in 2016.

The purple lines of Snapchat show that significantly more undergraduates use it than other groups (50% in 2016, diamond markers). Taught postgraduates (square markers) use it a lesser amount – 26% and steady – while use amongst research postgraduates (triangle markers) has fallen to 15%.

These trends are changed for LinkedIn (orange lines) with 45% of taught postgraduates (square markers), 31% of research postgraduates (triangle markers) and just 10% of undergraduates (diamond markers) using the channel.

Figure 14 shows the variations between the different student types for 2016. Snapchat and LinkedIn show the greatest variation. Apart from WhatsApp, a smaller percentage of research postgraduates use all channels.

There are also differences in the social media channels used by students in different divisions: Figure 15. To try and simplify the chart, Facebook (all values between 90% and 95%), Google+ (all values below 10%) and Vine (all values below 5%) have not been included.
Figure 15 Percentage of respondents using each social media channel over time by division
YouTube (green lines) is clearly the most popular for all divisions, however the percentage of respondents from MPLS (green line, square markers) who use it is both highest (72%) and shows the greatest increase since 2015 (up from 61%).

With WhatsApp (brown lines), MPLS (square markers) is significantly lower than the other divisions (50% compared to 58-63%) and Humanities (brown line, diamond markers) shows the greatest increase (40% in 2015 to 60% in 2016).

LinkedIn (yellow lines) shows the most obvious difference between divisions. Social Science respondents (yellow line, circle markers) have consistently been higher users of this channel, 40% of respondents in 2016 said they used it compared to less than 20% of respondents in other divisions. It should be noted that usage of Facebook, YouTube and WhatsApp by all divisions are ahead of LinkedIn usage by Social Science respondents.

Other points to note are the lower percentage of MPLS respondents using Instagram (turquoise line, square markers) and the high percentage of Humanities respondents using Tumblr. Twitter usage (red lines) is between 21 and 33% and is declining for all but Humanities respondents (diamond markers).

12 University Followers
Following on from the question on social media channels, the survey asked Do you follow Oxford University on any of these networks? with the options Facebook, Google+, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter and You Tube. Figure 16 shows the results for 2015 (blue) and 2016 (green). Instagram is becoming more popular (10 to 14%) while Facebook and Twitter are declining slightly (65 to 62% and 17 to 14% respectively).

![Figure 16 Percentage of respondents who follow the University on each channel over time](image)

In Figure 17, the percentage of respondents who use each channel regularly has been added and is shown by the red dots (data from the social media channels question in section 11). Clearly there are a lot of respondents who regularly use YouTube but do not subscribe to the University’s channel.

All the information from this question has been passed on to the University Web Officer, as was the results of questions on the usefulness of and videos on the [www.ox.ac.uk](http://www.ox.ac.uk) website.
Virtual Learning Environments

Questions about virtual learning environments (VLEs) have been included in previous years’ surveys but this year the phrasing was changed to ask about how the respondents had used VLEs. Specifically, they were asked if they had used a VLE to:

- Access a timetable of classes, lectures etc.
- Access learning materials e.g. readings, hand-outs, slide presentations and videos
- Take quizzes or short tests
- Take part in online discussions with your teacher and other students
- Share files with your teacher and/or other students
- Receive official notifications and announcements
- Submit essays or other written assignments
- Receive feedback
- Receive grades
- Haven't used

The results of the survey are shown in Figure 18. The most common functions people had performed with a VLE were to access learning materials (67%) and access a timetable (64%). Least common functions were to receive feedback (31%) and to take part in online discussions (27%). Only 12% had not used a VLE.
14 Expectations

This question asked users *Thinking about your studies, please indicate whether you expect to be able to...*

- Do most of your reading online (e.g. journal articles, book chapters)
- Obtain online copies of handouts to read before each lecture
- Obtain online copies of handouts to read after each lecture
- Take notes on your laptop or tablet during lectures and other classes
- Listen to/watch a recording of a lecture afterwards
- Submit your written assignments online
- Get feedback on your written assignments online

For each item, the respondents could rate them as

- Yes, I expect to be able to do this
- It would be nice to be able to do this, but I don’t expect it
- It doesn’t matter to me at the moment
- I haven’t even thought about it

The results are shown in Figure 19. Online handouts after lectures is expected by 64% or students. 54% expected to be able to submit work online, 52% expect to be able to write notes on a laptop in lectures and doing most reading online was expected by 51%. On the other hand, 24% said taking notes on a laptop was not important.

When considering what people would like but don’t expect, 51% listed listening to or watching recordings of lectures and 42% mentioned online handouts before lectures.
There is clearly a difference of opinion regarding reading online. Four of the free comments submitted referred to the importance of good online notes and essential reading. Three comments asked for physical copies of reading materials. Other comments related to the type of information available online, asking for divisional handbooks, timetables, previous exams and exam reports, reading lists, etc. All results from this question have been passed on to the relevant teams in IT Services.

Figure 20 shows how people’s expectations have changed since 2015. The darker section of each bar shows the percentage of respondents who expect a facility. The lighter section shows those who rated it nice but not expected. For example, the dark pink section in the 2015 column shows the percentage of respondents who rated Submit assignments online as expected in 2015. Comparing the pink bars for 2015 and 2016 shows that more people now expect to be able to do this (28% in 2015, 41% in 2016). The data is also shown in the table below.
### Figure 20 Ratings for each facility over time

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Online handouts after lectures</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online handouts before lectures</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do most reading online</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listen to/watch lecture recording afterwards</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submit written assignments online</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get online feedback on assignments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take notes on laptop during lectures</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Expect
- 2015: 57%, 2016: 64%
- 2015: 43%, 2016: 47%
- 2015: 41%, 2016: 51%
- 2015: 26%, 2016: 29%
- 2015: 42%, 2016: 54%
- 2015: 28%, 2016: 41%
- 2015: 46%, 2016: 52%

#### Nice
- 2015: 33%, 2016: 25%
- 2015: 46%, 2016: 42%
- 2015: 36%, 2016: 31%
- 2015: 57%, 2016: 51%
- 2015: 32%, 2016: 24%
- 2015: 36%, 2016: 30%
- 2015: 19%, 2016: 18%

#### Not important
- 2015: 4%, 2016: 5%
- 2015: 6%, 2016: 6%
- 2015: 16%, 2016: 14%
- 2015: 10%, 2016: 13%
- 2015: 18%, 2016: 14%
- 2015: 25%, 2016: 20%
- 2015: 27%, 2016: 24%

#### Not considered
- 2015: 3%, 2016: 2%
- 2015: 3%, 2016: 3%
- 2015: 3%, 2016: 4%
- 2015: 4%, 2016: 3%
- 2015: 4%, 2016: 5%
- 2015: 5%, 2016: 6%
- 2015: 7%, 2016: 6%
- 2015: 4%, 2016: 3%

### 15 Comments, queries and suggestions

If you have any comments, queries or suggestions relating to this survey, please contact IT Services Communications and Web Office at communications@it.ox.ac.uk.