

### SoLAR Flare UK – Next steps

Liveblog notes from final session at #flareUK, discussing next steps and future directions.



### What should we do next?

Want to spawn other activity in the UK. What do you think is needed? People will step up now, or later, to do that.

A collection of real case studies. The opportunities, challenges, what's happened as a result. Even if at a pilot level. Not necessarily glorious success stories – we tried this and got nothing would save others. Collation – Educause has plenty of case studies but they're hard to find – so where to put them is key. JISC have some already – will explore putting them on the SoLAR web page. Building on JISC's paper series. Any ideas for projects to share as case studies, please get in touch with Sheila MacNeill from JISC – could be written, or video, or all sorts of things. Obvious role for SoLAR to play.

SoLAR looking to launch an evidence hub. Have [one for OER](#) – hoping to set this up for learning analytics.

Series of end user workshops – participatory design. Getting learning analytics examples to teachers and learners. Would be useful to see a range of different dashboards – e.g. bring along a dashboard event. See what's useful, what looks good.

'Dashboard'. Educational research articles backed up with data and statistical analysis. Is a dashboard that going on out of view and something recognisable in their language that shows up? Data visualisation, infographic. Who can see it, what's the best representation. Graphs, pie charts – appear in most VLE products now. Every VLE has one these days. Critical question about interpretation before it appears in the dashboard – whole load of decisions before then. Reliability of that data is important. Is anyone critiquing what's available here? Possible project. Access to dashboards is tricky. Concern that proprietary tools pre-empt our wants and needs – they're bright and shiny and new, temptation to use them without concern for validity. Messages may trigger inappropriate actions. Case studies of "stupid things to do with dashboards" – instructive examples, sensitise people. A dashboard workshop to look at this.

Huge ethical issues around questions of data here. Make sure that practitioners and companies are working sensitively and appropriately.

Special Interest Groups. Part of SoLAR growing up in to something the appropriate structures. Some suggestions:

- Student retention and success – was a big one here at this meeting.
- Another group might be analytics-punk group for academics who want to do it themselves. Not just top down, make it easy to share simple recipes, e.g. how to rip stuff out of Blackboard.
- Attainment – some already agreed to get together in future to look at this.
- Institutional self-assessment tool to evaluate their analytics – a maturity model. Educause have an institutional readiness survey. Educator-readiness survey? Not just about institutions. Can do a lot more harm than good if you go in all guns blazing.

- Data analysis hackathon. Data interpretation, dangerous extrapolations, data crunching learning things – people who know what you can extract e.g. correlation/causation – modeling data in good and bad ways. Data scientists to look at. Not everyone can work at that level. A basics data science – knowing when to fear what you don't know. Business Intelligence community sometimes talk powerfully about the ethics- sometimes have insight in to what's going on that others don't know.
- How you make a business case for analytics, what the best argument is. Lessons to learn about how that can be managed – some captured in the JISC paper released today.

Do we want more meetings like today? General ones? Perhaps should be more vendors here. UCISA – heads of IT/vendors. Myles is engaging with them. Enterprise architecture issues sit behind all of this. Many institutions rethinking this at the moment, so good time to lobby them. Make conditions right and then you can do it, vs. guerilla activity to show what's possible. Bit chicken-and-egg, need to go from both ends. Lots of bits going on where academics are having a go at it, and institutions revisiting their enterprise architecture. Many people are already asking the questions and testing things out.

—

This work by [Doug Clow](#) is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Unported License](#).

No further permission needed to reuse/remix (with attribution), but it's nice to be notified if you do.