

Student Guide to Learning Analytics

Introduction

This guide sits alongside the University of Gloucestershire's Learning Analytics Policy. A key principle is to be completely transparent about all aspects of our use of learning analytics. We want you to understand exactly what data is being collected, how it is being processed and what we will be doing with the information. This document provides these details and will be updated as our use of learning analytics develops.

Statement of Principles

- We will use Learning Analytics to help all students reach their full academic potential.
- We will be transparent about data collection, sharing, consent and responsibilities.
- We will abide by ethical principles and align with our university strategy, policies and values.
- Learning Analytics will not be used to inform significant action at an individual level without human intervention.

What is learning analytics?

Learning analytics are the “digital footprints” left when you use Moodle and other university systems, which combined with data such as grades and past academic history provide additional information to you, your lecturers, tutors and support staff to support your learning.

As a student at the University of Gloucestershire through registration and your engagement with your studies we already collect this data and use it to review aspects of our modules and manage our use of resources more efficiently. However, using this data for learning analytics to provide you, your lecturers, tutors and support staff with additional information to support your learning is something new.

In collaboration with Jisc, the UK's expert body for digital technology and digital resources in higher education, the University is putting your learning data into a learning analytics processor. A measure of engagement for each individual will be generated and compared with class or group averages. Results that differ from the average can be identified and interventions put in place for individuals.

How can learning analytics help me?

Learning analytics can give you an accurate perception of how your learning is progressing. This can be valuable information throughout your studies.

The **Learning Analytics Student App, Study Goal**, developed by Jisc, is available via MyGlos or your relevant App Store. Study Goal shows you information on your learning activities. A score is shown for ‘engagement’, calculated from the data created when you use Moodle or the library and when you attend a lecture.

Your ‘attainment’ i.e. your marks and grades are also displayed in the app, though these are provisional, and must be confirmed by a Board of Examiners, and, until confirmed, may change.

If you consent, mails or text messages may also be sent to you automatically suggesting additional support or resources that could help your studies. Messages may also be sent to congratulate you on good performance or improvement. The Study Goal User Guide is available on the MyGlos Help page: <https://myhelp.glos.ac.uk/study-resources/IT-skills-and-resources/Pages/study-goal-app.aspx>.

How can learning analytics help my tutor

Learning analytics also helps you by giving your personal tutor richer information on your learning, which they may use to discuss your progress in regular meetings or contact you to check you feel you are on track, or to arrange a meeting to review your progress.

Tutors have access to something called *Data Explorer*. This flags those students whose patterns of study suggest they may need additional tailored support. Along with other information, these “risk ratings” help tutors decide if they should contact students. It is important to note that Data Explorer only provides indicators: the model will always have a degree of inaccuracy, but it helps us to prioritise those students who are most likely to require additional help.

The types of help that will be available will be formalised more fully as we roll out our learning analytics systems, and are likely to include, among other things, recommendations of additional class resources, referral to specific study skills programmes, and general advice about managing workloads. We will share more with you as the package of interventions is developed.

Learning analytics will not be used for assessment purposes. However, some of the original data sources owned by the University may be used separately for assessment purposes and for monitoring of attendance, outside of the learning analytics system. The student will have been informed of this separately.

Looking after your data

Your personal information is safe and secure. It will only be used in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998, the General Data Protection Regulation (2018) and more specifically the [University's Data Protection Policy](#) and the [Student Privacy Notice](#):

- Background information: your name, identifiers used by the University, date of birth, ethnicity, gender, declared disabilities, contact details, entry qualifications, whether your parents were in higher education, your socio-economic background, whether you are an overseas student, contact details, and a link to the photo we hold of you. Two of these data categories are sensitive or special data, Ethnicity and Disability. We are including these within our models with the aim of improving our monitoring of equality of opportunity and to improve the accuracy of the models. They will be used for **Statistical Purposes only**.
- Details about your course, the modules you are taking, and your tutors.
- Details of your assessments, marks and grades obtained.
- Details of your activity in Moodle and any other Virtual Learning Tool(s) you may use: logins, resources viewed, assessments submitted and graded, and session timeouts.
- Details about your attendance.
- Details about your library usage.

Only those members of staff who work in collaboration with the data processors to check the accuracy and adequacy of the modelling and those members of staff who have a professional requirement to support you are permitted to view the analytics about you individually.

Legal bases used for including data in Learning Analytics

Universities will be designated as '**public authorities**' for the purposes of the Data Protection Act 2018 (the bill extends the definition to all bodies subject to the Freedom of Information Act).

Guidance on the GDPR from the Information Commissioner Office (see <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr/>) indicates that the **public task** basis is likely to apply to the data processing as learning analytics relates to the University's core learning and teaching functions plus how we support student retention, progression and attainment.