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eLearning Network Meeting

Richard Reece

July 3 2013

University of Manchester

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What is higher education for?

- The purpose of higher education is to create independent critical thinkers and decision makers, not just receivers of knowledge
  - Vast resources of information are readily available
  - Making sense of this is becoming harder
  - Availability and use of technology in the classroom

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Technology in education

Impact

Time

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Changing face of education

- Education changed for ever when:
  - Wikipedia became a trusted source
  - Google became a verb
- Information availability means that education is far more about how to think, and how to sift through huge amounts of information rather than rote learning

Google

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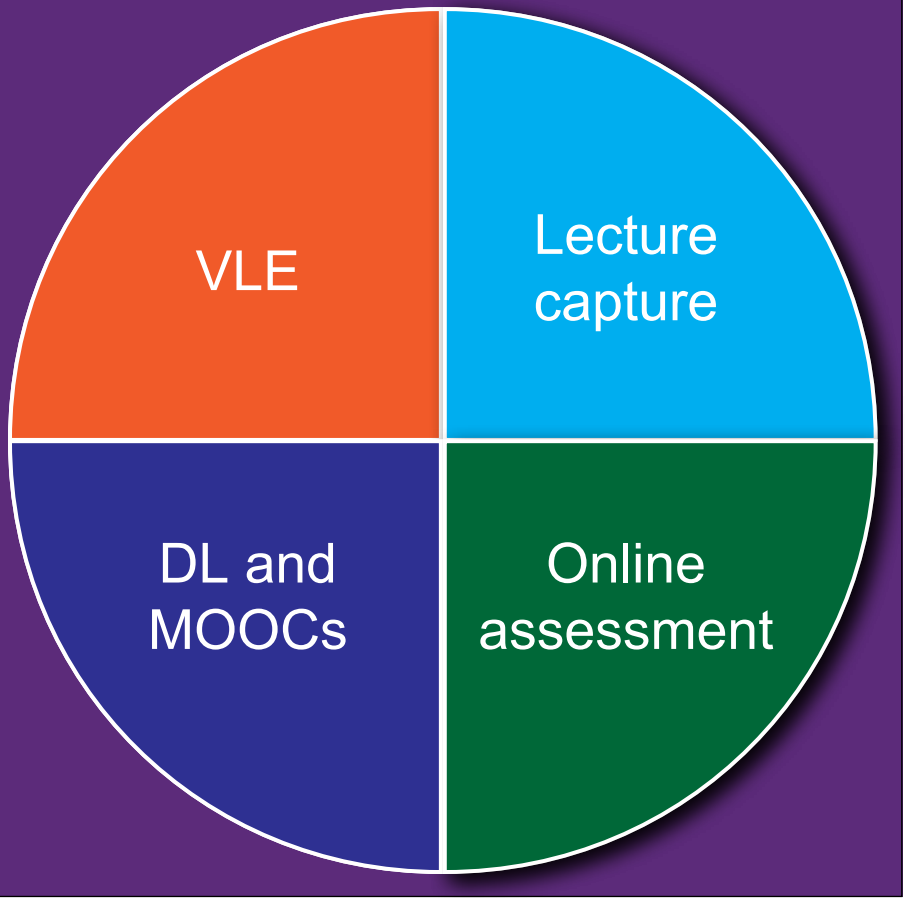
Changes and challenges

- Higher education has undergone radical, and almost unprecedented, change in recent years
- The way we teach has changed too
- Student expectation
  - Digital natives
  - Digital adoptors



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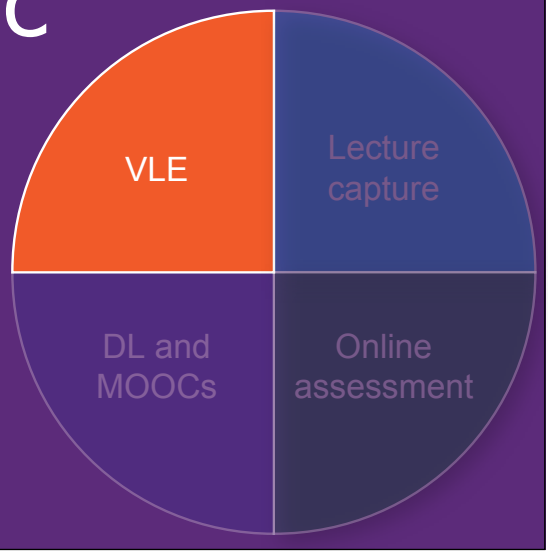
Blackboard

Blackboard

- Upgrade schedule in Easter/Summer
- Bb 9.1, service pack 11
  - Bug fixes
  - Students to access grades from all courses in one place, a My Blackboard Profile, and a 'social academic network' tool
  - New content editor
- Recently applied cleaner and sleeker look and feel



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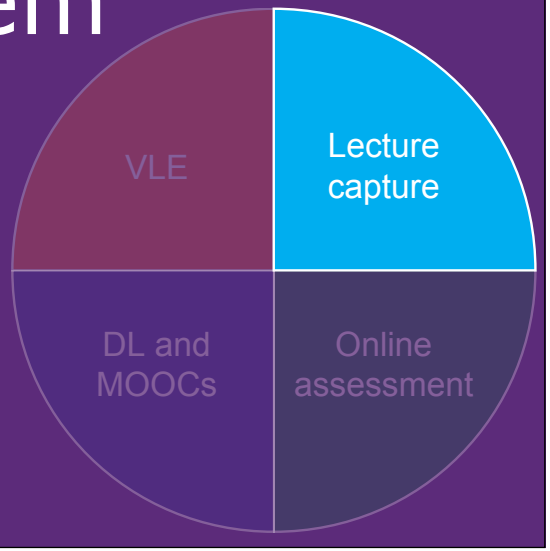
matterhorn

Lecture capture

- Over the last two years we have been experimenting with lecture capture
- Devised a system where recordings are made automatically for any T+L activity
- Academics teach normally and everything else is done for them
- From Sept, 100 locations will be capture-enabled and staff will need to opt-out if they do not want recordings made



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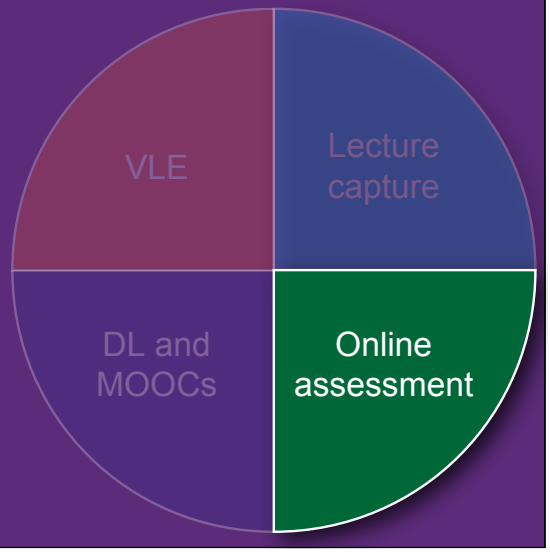
Blackboard

Online assessment

- Helps both students and teachers
  - Consistent, accurate results
  - Immediate feedback
  - Increased opportunities for students to act on feedback



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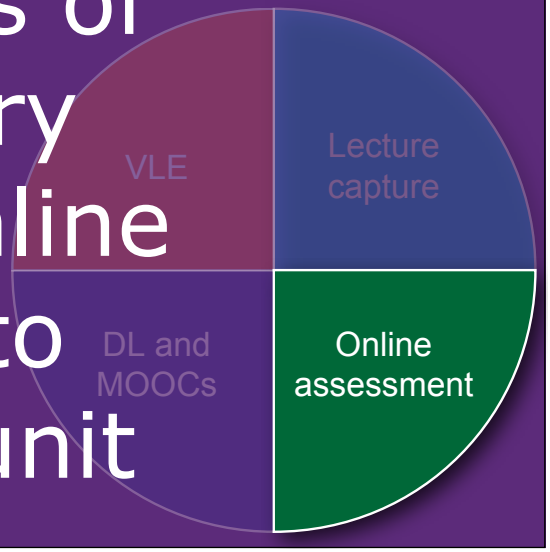
Online assessment

- Helps both students and teachers
  - Opportunities to combine human and computer marking
  - Creative media and online peer and self-assessment
  - Evidence on the effectiveness of curriculum design and delivery
  - Formative and summative online assessments incorporated into design and delivery of each unit



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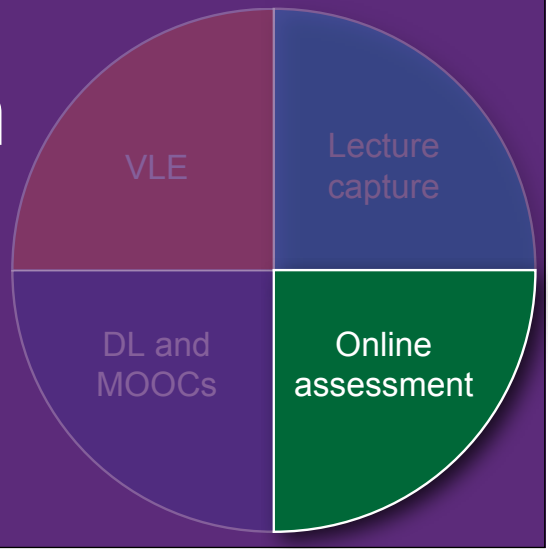
Online assessment

- The online assessment engine in Bb works!
  - In May/June 2013 over 1,000 students sat summative online exams for 15 separate units
  - No technical issues arose
  - Need to rebuild confidence in online assessment



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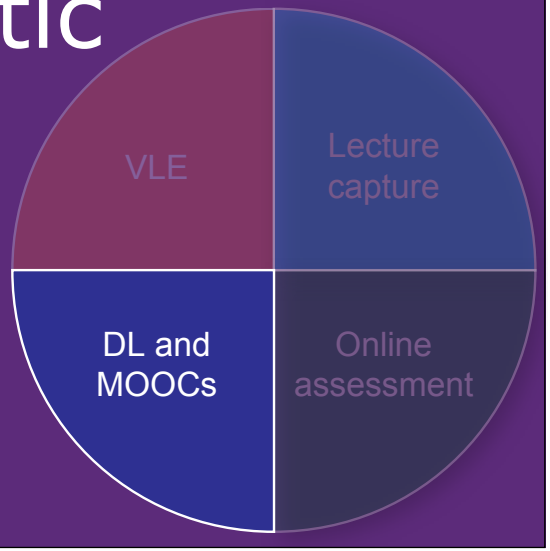
Distance Learning

- Why do we do DL?
- Benefits to students:
  - Study at a time, pace and place convenient to individual needs
  - Learning integrated into existing professional/personal/domestic commitments
  - Cost-effective mechanism of studying



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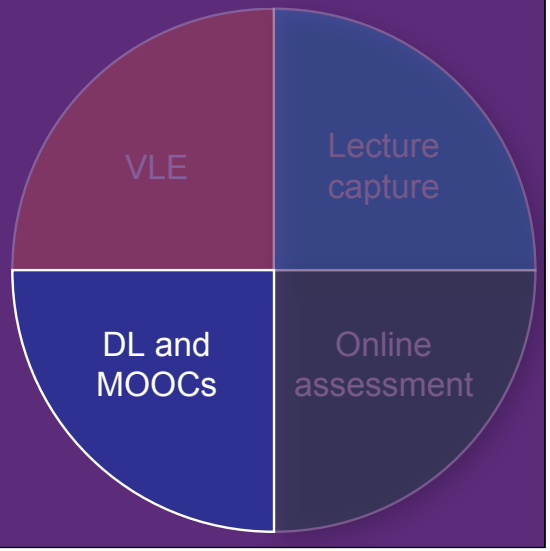
Distance Learning

- Why do we do DL?
- Benefits to The University:
  - Financial contribution
  - Possible fall in on-campus applications
  - Global footprint
  - Lead in technology-assisted learning
  - Widening access



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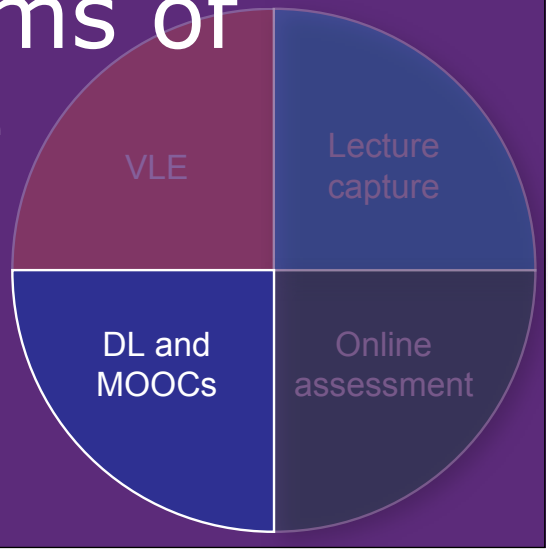
Distance Learning

- UoM delivers a wide range of UG, PG and CPD programmes through DL or blended approaches
- Over 7,000 students registered on DL programmes at UoM
- DL is a big activity both in terms of student numbers and revenue
- Joined up approach to move away from 'cottage industry'



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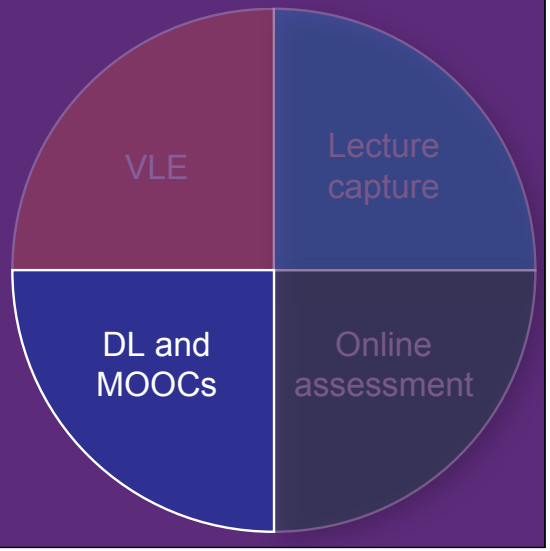
coursera

MOOCs

- Massive Open Online Courses
  - Set to change the face of HE
  - Lots of hype (and hope)
  - UoM has signed with Coursera
  - Aim to offer 5-6 MOOCs initially which are linked to strategic goals/aims of Schools
  - Courses will run free of charge to participants
  - Showcase UoM teaching



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coursera

MOOCs

- Massive Open Online Courses

Physical Chemistry

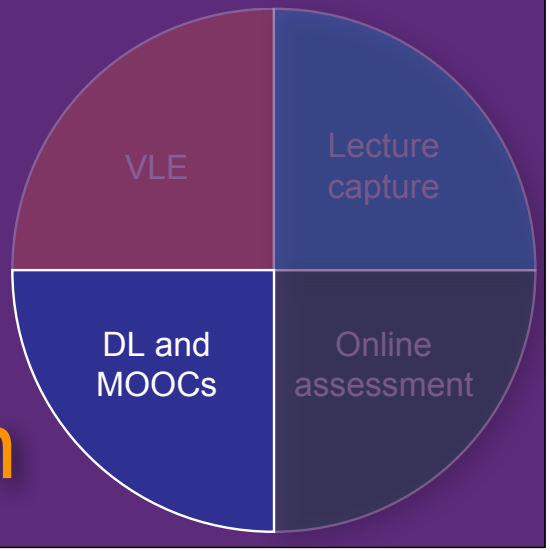
Strategic Thinking

Population Health

Planet Earth

Water Management

Global Health/Humanitarianism



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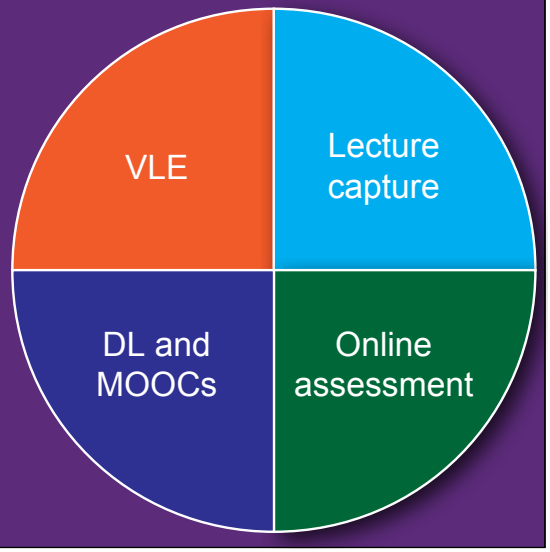
eLearning benefits

- Portfolio diversity, financial viability
- Exploit familiar environment
- MOOCs offer huge potential to 'showcase' teaching and learning excellence at UoM
- Lessons learned from DL can be used to bolster our expertise in eLearning delivered to on-campus students



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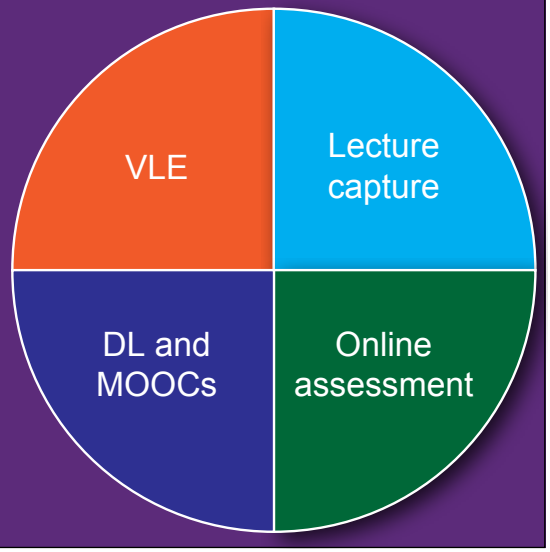
eLearning benefits

- UoM 2020 Strategic Plan, Goal 2:
  - "highest quality teaching resource, including staff and infrastructure, in a rich eLearning environment, by upgrading infrastructure for distance and mobile learning and ensuring staff time is prioritised for teaching and students"
- eLearning strategic plan