Setting up your first poll with Poll Everywhere

Using Poll Everywhere for voting, analysis and feedback with your students
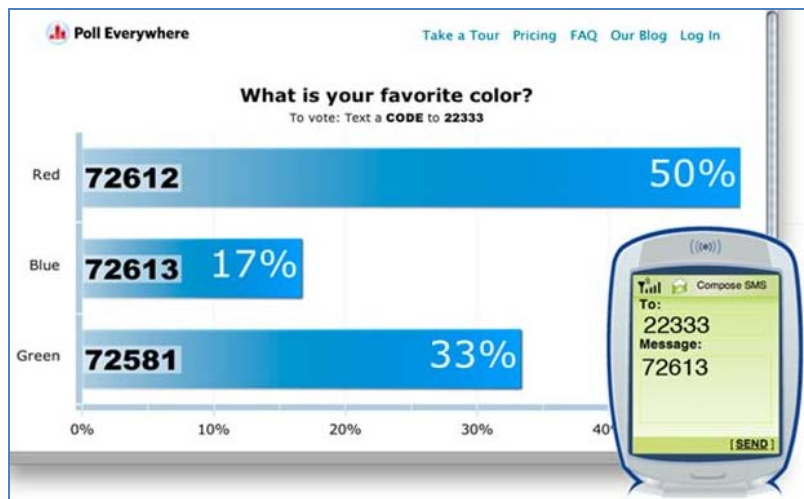

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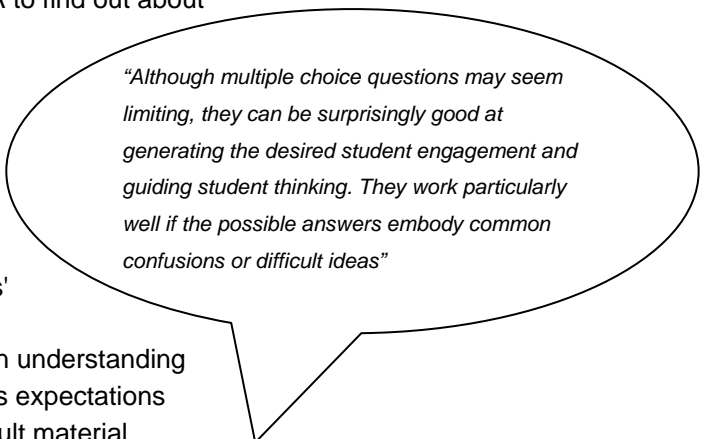
What is Poll Everywhere?

Poll everywhere is an online voting system that uses text message responses from your audience to answer questions and/or provide feedback in real time. Your students use their mobile phones as a voting device instead of having to hand out 'clickers'. Students can also use their laptop and vote via the web.

The system is entirely web based and tutors can access the software using a generic campus based account to set up questions. Get in touch with your LTA to find out about account details.

When would I use it?

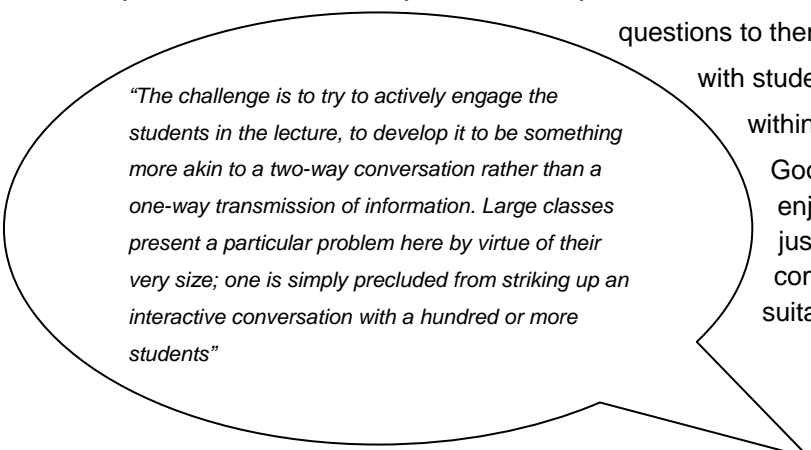**Electronic voting systems could be used in lectures for**:

"Although multiple choice questions may seem limiting, they can be surprisingly good at generating the desired student engagement and guiding student thinking. They work particularly well if the possible answers embody common confusions or difficult ideas"

- Increasing the lecturer's knowledge of students' understanding
- Increasing the students' knowledge of their own understanding
- Increasing the students' knowledge of lecturer's expectations
- Increasing the students' understanding of difficult material

In particular:

- Preliminary checking of existing understanding or preparation - a diagnostic, informing teaching
- Verifying comprehension - confirmatory; can people apply the concept?
- Assessment and revision
- Creating a community - e.g. by asking questions about students' backgrounds as scene setting for a course
- Initiating discussion
- Peer assessments
- Focus and direction - to guide teaching priorities and time allocation
- Experiments using human responses - suitable primarily within a psychology context
- Administrative uses - e.g. student feedback on the lecture or course
- To stimulate discussion as the springboard for a class-wide discussion

Why would I use it?

Add an interactive element to your lectures by using a Personal Response System to engage with your students. Poll Everywhere allows you to connect with your students during lectures by posing questions to them; this has proven successful in engaging with students and adding an element of interactivity within lectures.
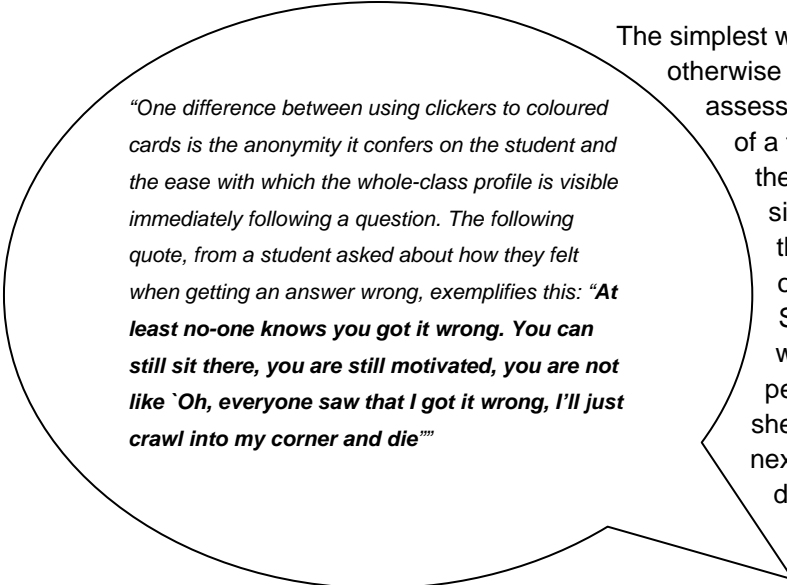
"The challenge is to try to actively engage the students in the lecture, to develop it to be something more akin to a two-way conversation rather than a one-way transmission of information. Large classes present a particular problem here by virtue of their very size; one is simply precluded from striking up an interactive conversation with a hundred or more students"

Good lectures are stimulating, engaging and enjoyable. But good teachers do more than just lecture. Good teachers draw together components of the curriculum, establish a suitable environment and integrate assessment

tasks so that appropriate study behaviours are encouraged and learning results. This integration of the curriculum, the teaching and learning environment and the assessment to meet the intended learning outcomes is often referred to as Aligned Teaching (Biggs, 2003).
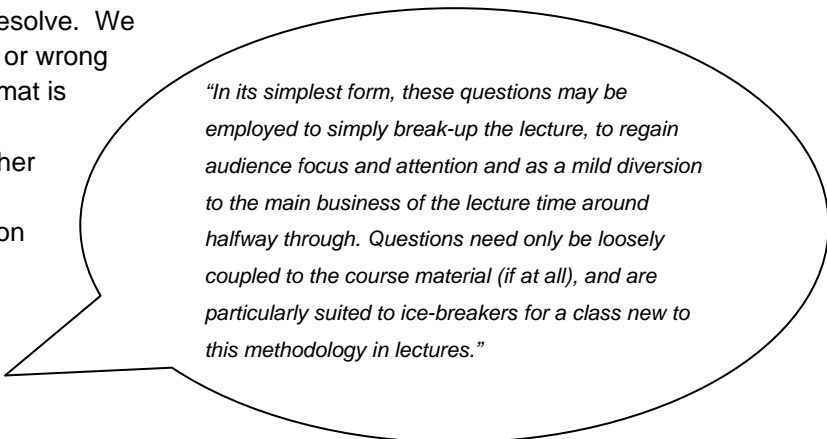
To enhance learning, assessment should be an integrated component of the curricula and not an afterthought or an 'add-on'. The importance of assessment and its impact on student engagement has been noted in previous research, see for example Black and Wiliam (1998)

"One difference between using clickers to coloured cards is the anonymity it confers on the student and the ease with which the whole-class profile is visible immediately following a question. The following quote, from a student asked about how they felt when getting an answer wrong, exemplifies this: "At least no-one knows you got it wrong. You can still sit there, you are still motivated, you are not like `Oh, everyone saw that I got it wrong, I'll just crawl into my corner and die`""

The simplest way to introduce some interaction into an otherwise conventional lecture is to add some self assessment questions (SAQs) during or at the end of a traditional lecture so students can check if they have understood the material. This is simplest for the presenter: just add two or three simple questions near the end without otherwise changing the lecture plan. Students who get them wrong now know what they need to work on. If the average performance is worse than the lecturer likes, she or he can address this at the start of the next lecture. Research has shown that even doing this in a simple way is viewed positively by student, as they welcome being able to check their understanding.

Questions can also be set to discuss, not resolve. We frequently use questions that have no right or wrong answer to stimulate discussion and this format is familiar in debates and exam questions. Collecting this discussion electronically, either via an MCQ or the free text function in Poll Everywhere encourages greater participation by being anonymous, and has the added advantage of being recorded so the information can be revisited and made available online.

"In its simplest form, these questions may be employed to simply break-up the lecture, to regain audience focus and attention and as a mild diversion to the main business of the lecture time around halfway through. Questions need only be loosely coupled to the course material (if at all), and are particularly suited to ice-breakers for a class new to this methodology in lectures."

Setting up your poll

Creating a set of poll questions is done in the following stages:

- Create a new poll for each question

- Go to 'My Polls' and link the polls that you are planning to use in your lecture

- Download linked polls as a .PPT or .PPTX presentation

1. To access Poll Everywhere open a web browser and enter the following URL:
   www.polleverywhere.com

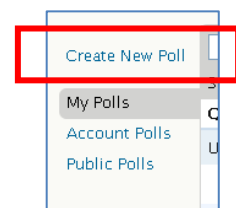2. Click on the **Login** link at the top right of the screen and enter your login

details

3. The page you're taken to is always the '**My Polls'** page where you organise existing Polls

4. To start creating your poll click on the '**Create New Poll**' link.

MCQ

Let's look at the Multiple Choice first.

1. Click on the '**Multiple choice poll**' link

2. Enter the question in the text field provided

3. Now enter the possible responses in the fields below. You are provided with **3 fields** but can

   add more by clicking on the '**Add an Option**' button.

Your completed question should look something like the screen below.

The '**AUTO KEYWORD**' field to the right of each answer is for you to enter a keyword that your students would use to vote for an option on your poll. If you don't specify your own keyword, Poll Everywhere automatically assigns a unique number like '2499'. If you can customise the keyword, this could enhance the students' experience. For example, instead of texting '2499' for £10 they could just text the keyword £10 had you have allocated it as a keyword.

NB – Your keywords must be unique, alpha-numeric, can't contain spaces or punctuation, and must be within 1 and 15 characters long.

If you would like to mark a response as correct here's what you do:

- Click on the 'Responses' link on the right.
- Check the box 'Grade incoming responses'
- Mark which question/s is/are correct

4. Click the '**Save new poll**' button.

You'll now see the created poll, ready to receive votes, so, as in the screen shot below your students would text the number next to their chosen answer e.g. 193168 if their response is £10 to the phone number +447624806527

To add more questions click the '**Create New Poll**' link in the menu on the left and repeat the steps above.

Free Text Poll

Let's take a look at the Free Text Poll

1. Click on the 'Create New Poll' link in the right hand menu and this time select Free Text Poll.
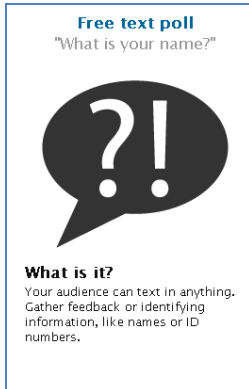
2. Enter the question text in the field provided.

3. You may want to limit the number of responses so click on the **Responses** link on the right

   hand side of the page and choose one of the two options (see picture below). **NOTE** the

   default setting is 'as much as they like'.

4.   Click '**Save new poll'**.

Grouping your polls

Once you have created all of your questions you should group them together. Grouping them together makes it easier to manage your polls. We have created default groups for your schools so you may want to just move your questions to those groups, this can be done by dragging and dropping into the group. To set up your own groups follow the instructions below.

1. Click on the '**My Polls**' link in the menu on the right

2. You'll see a list of all polls created for this account. To group your questions together tick the check boxes for each you wish to group and then click the '**Group**' button at the top of the screen.
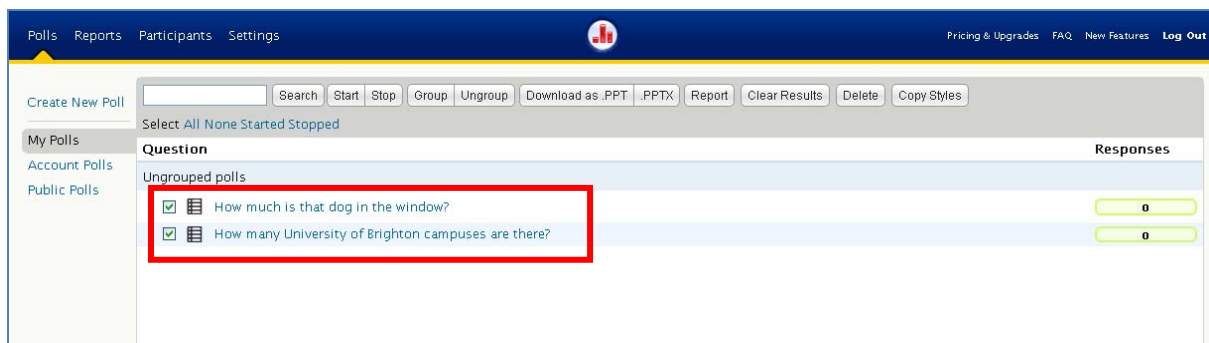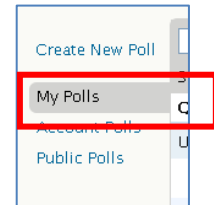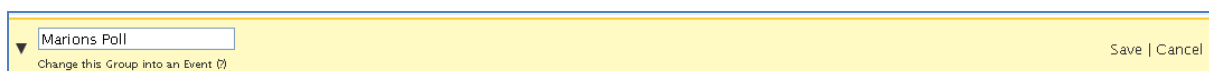

Now that you've grouped the polls you can name the group.

Let's name the group first.

1. Once grouped you'll see 'New Group' appear with your questions listed underneath. Hover over the '**New Group**' until it turns yellow and three links appear to the right – Edit, Survey View and Delete.
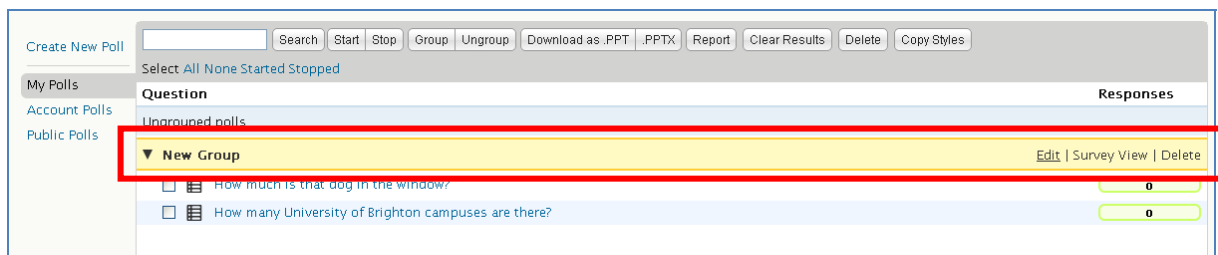

2. Click **Edit** and enter a name for your Group in the space provided and click **Save**.

Downloading your Polls as a PowerPoint presentation

This is optional as you can run the poll from the Poll Everywhere site, but you may want to incorporate the questions into a presentation in which case you could download it

1. Go to 'My Polls' and check the boxes next to the questions you want to include in the presentation.

2. Click 'Download as .PPTX' for office 2007 and above, or 'Download as .PPT' for older versions of office.
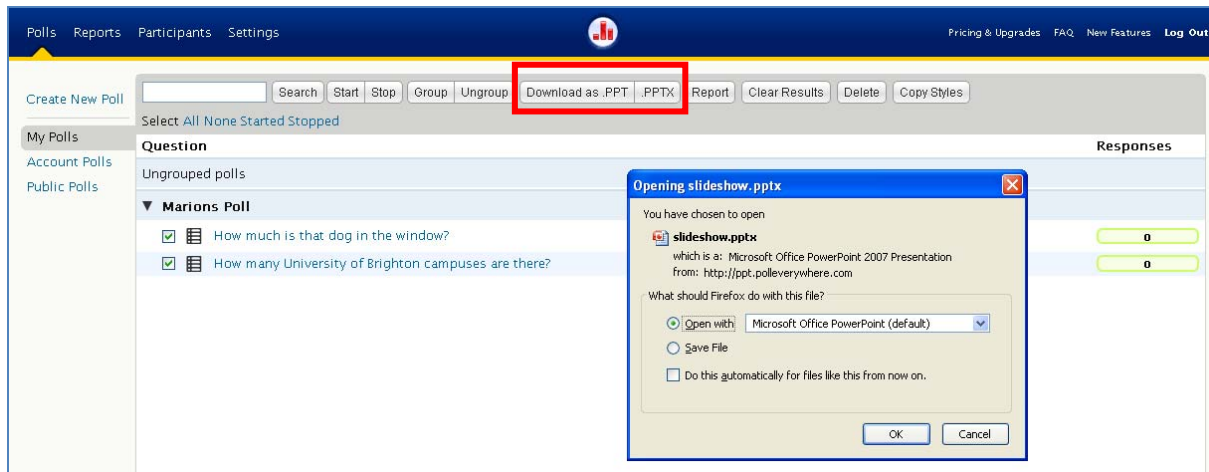

3. Select '**Save File**' and click **OK**.

To use the presentation and activate the questions, open the presentation and then run the presentation.

NOTE: This requires a network connection

Running your Poll from the Poll Everywhere website

1. Click on '**My Polls**' and then click on the title of the first question in the poll.

2. You could now receive votes for this poll but you may find it easier to display the question in full screen. To do this hover over the bottom right hand side of the chart, you'll see a '**Full screen**' button, just click on this.
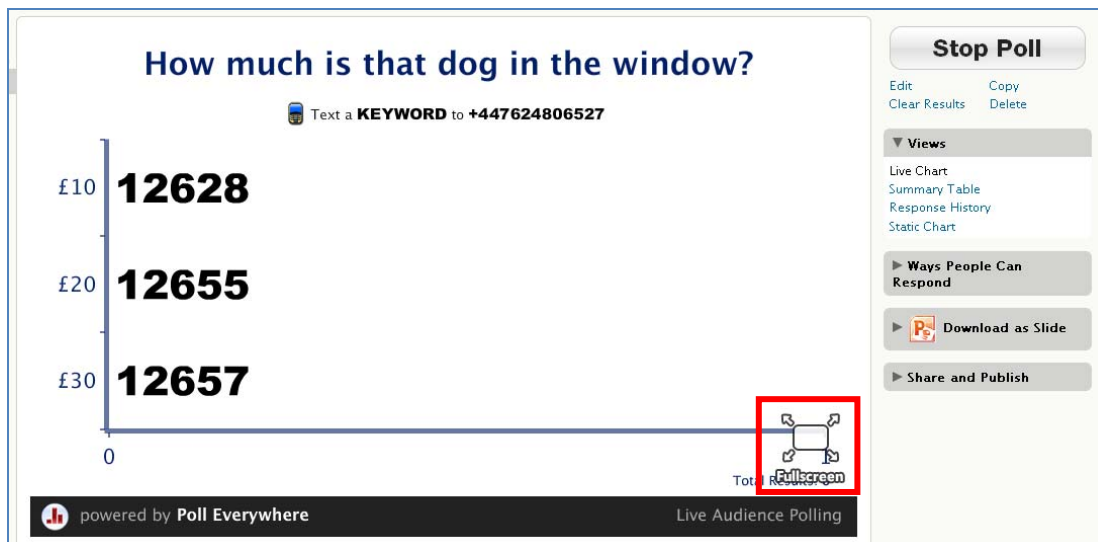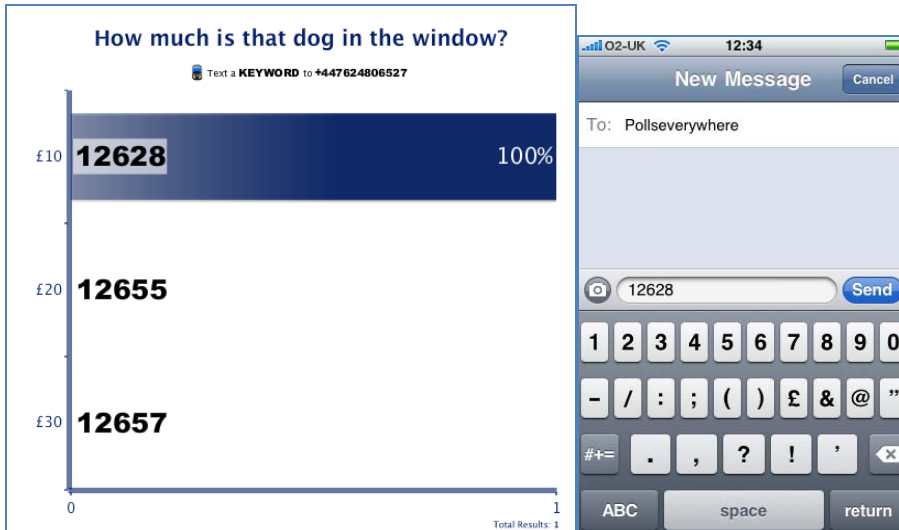

Full Screen Mode
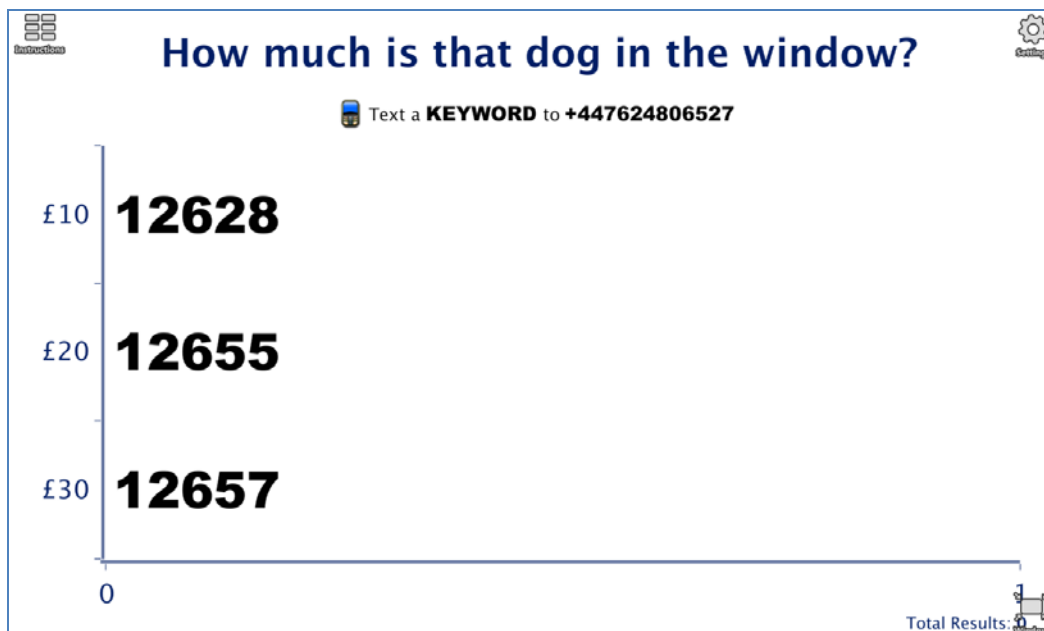
In full screen mode you'll see three icons in both top and the bottom right corner.

Settings – this gives you the option of changing the look and feel of the poll

Instructions – is an optional display page

Window – will take you out of 'Full Screen' mode

As votes are received this results page will be updated with results (see screen shots below)

3. To load the next question click on '**My Polls**' and then click on the next question title.

    TIP - To make the flow of presenting the questions easier you could open each question in a new tab prior to the start of the poll.

Using Poll Everywhere within studentcentral

As well as providing links to your polls from within studentcentral you can also embed a variety of poll widgets within a content area on studentcentral. These widgets can enable 'one click' voting, display live results and final summary results.

Let's look at how you do this.

1. Click on the '**My Polls**' link and then click on the poll question you want to embed.

2. Now click on the '**Ways People Can Respond**' link in the right hand menu. NOTE there are a number of options you may want to try out, from tweeting to email vote options, but to embed into studentcentral check the 'Smartphone' and Web widget' options.

3. Now click on the '**Share and Publish**' link in the menu on the left and select '**Blog or Web Page**'.
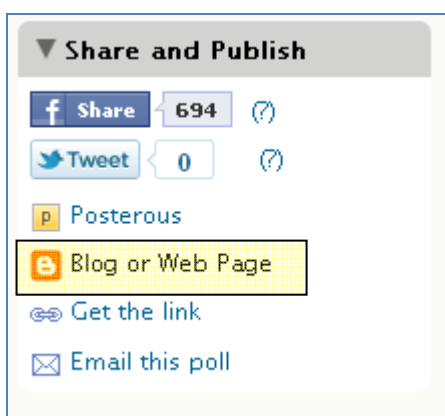
4. You'll be taken to a page where you have the widgets available for that particular type of question, i.e. Multiple Choice has 3 widgets and Free Text has 1 widget. Under each widget is some javascript code, **copy the code for the widget** you wish to use.

5. Login to student**central** and go to the module in which you want to use Poll Everywhere.

6. Click on the appropriate content area for the poll.

7. Click **Build Content**>**Item**

8. Enter a title for your poll and then in the Text editor click on the '**Toggle HTML Source Mode**' button and paste in the javascript code you copied earlier.

9. Click '**Submit'**

Your widget should now look something like the picture below, depending on which widget you selected.

NOTE: do not edit the widget in studentcentral as this breaks it

Appendix - List of Poll Everywhere functions

Individual Poll Settings (when creating the poll)

- **Responses** – Set no of responses per respondent & Grade incoming responses (mark correct answers – useful if respondents are identified)
- **Reply Message** – sends a generic response to all respondents, can be customised with 125 characters
- **How People can respond** – Txt, tweets, smart phones or wifi enabled devices via poll4.com, widget
- **Who can Respond** – Everybody, Only registered participants (registration is done via participants on the top menu)

My Polls settings

- **Start/Stop poll** - this freezes/unfreezes a poll but does loose responses. To start a poll again you would need to copy a poll
- **Group/Ungroup** – create sub grouped questions within one account
- **Download as PPT/PPTX** – Download selected Polls as a presentation that will update live as votes are received
- **Report –** Show how many voted, what time they voted and download as CSV
- **Clear Results**
- **Delete**
- **Copy Styles** – If you have customised the style for a poll using the poll settings you can apply that style to any of your questions
- **Polls can be reordered using drag and drop and have inline edit features** – Edit, Copy, Delete, Stop Poll

Create New Poll

- **Multiple Choice Poll** – click to create a new MCQ. With multiple choice polls, you define a list of possible answers. Graphs will display the results in real-time
- **Free Text Poll** – click to create a new free text response question. Your audience can text in anything. Gather feedback or identifying information, like names or ID numbers.
- **Goal Poll** – has no pedagogic use.
- **Dial Testing** – under development
- **Team Scoring** – under development

Further Reading

Case Study Using EVS for Learning:
http://technologyinprevention.wikispaces.com/file/view/PollEverywhereCaseStudy.pdf

Assessment of an electronic voting system within the tutorial setting: A randomised controlled trial,
Edward J Palmer, Peter G Devitt, Neville J De Young and David Morris
http://www.biomedcentral.com/1472-6920/5/24

Electronic voting systems for lectures then and now: A comparison of research and practice
Vicki Simpson and Martin Oliver http://www.ascilite.org.au/ajet/ajet23/simpson.html

Using EVS in Lectures Andy Sharman - The Independent Feb 2008
http://www.independent.co.uk/news/education/higher/a-new-electronic-voting-system-in-lectures-is-making-a-real-difference-781787.html

Using Voting Pads for Peer Review: Dave Foord http://davefoord.wordpress.com/2008/11/04/voting-pads/

Using an electronic voting system to enhance learning and teaching
http://www.engsc.ac.uk/journal/index.php/ee/article/viewArticle/111/147