

Voice of the teacher

UK edition

Teachers' opinions on the digital workspace and the intranet

Conquering complexity for teachers

Did you know that **people lose up to one hour per day** searching and accessing information?

While working with over 300 educational institutions on their digital workspace we've learned a lot about the frustrations of staff and students. Information Managers or IT leaders often **share stories from students and teachers**, but we wanted to hear the stories straight from the source.

Previously, we interviewed over a thousand students to understand their view on the IT environment. Now it was time to discover the voice of the teachers. That's why we've surveyed teachers among **79 educational institutions** within the United Kingdom.

We wanted to find out **how teachers experience their digital workspace**, what they **expect** from their digital workspace and what **their biggest frustrations** are to find out what should be the focus of **school leaders, information managers and IT leaders** of educational institutions.

Our goal with this paper is to inspire you to take action and implement your own research among staff members in your educational institution.

We wish you lots of reading pleasure!

The team of Workspace 365

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Management Infographic

Almost half of the teachers can't work on every device

41%

3/5 teachers say switching between applications is their biggest IT frustration



8/10 teachers say that they have too many document storages

Most teachers use 6-10 apps every day

50% of teachers rarely or never use the intranet

Top three frustrations regarding the intranet:

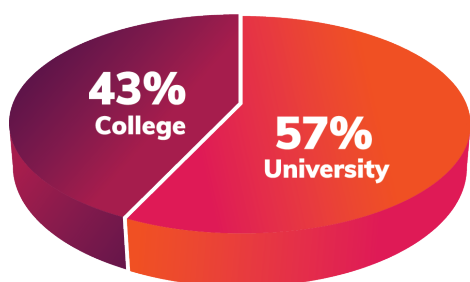
1. Too complicated to find information
2. It's outdated
3. Doesn't add value to work



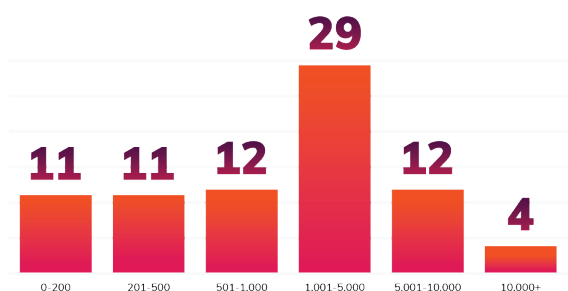
1. Who are the respondents?

For this research we surveyed teachers from 79 educational institutions in the UK. Below you will find a breakdown of the type of institutions and the number of employees. The teachers work at Universities and Colleges with the biggest group working at institutions with 1,000 to 5,000 employees. Most of the respondents (97%) answered that they already use an online workspace at the moment to find data and information.

Where do you work?



How many employees work at the educational organisation you work for?



2. What devices do teachers work on?

Wouldn't you expect that by 2022 every teacher would be able to work from any device? However, almost half of the respondents (41%) mentioned that they aren't able to work on every device yet. They are limited to devices that are managed by the institution or they can't work on every device because their software isn't accessible across devices yet.

Isn't this weird, considering many teachers are travelling a lot, work from different classes and teach at different faculties? What happens to productivity when a managed device breaks? How long will it take for them to be up and running again?

Advice for school leadership teams

Discover if teachers at your institution experience this as well, and if they see this as a challenge. Do a test to see how long it will take to be productive again after losing a device.

"I want a user friendly environment that integrates everything I need, supporting my teaching needs from any location and any device."

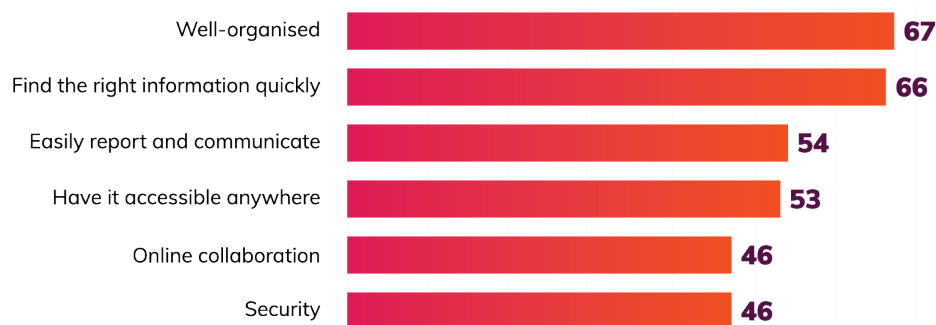
Teacher @ University of Leeds

3. What do teachers want in their digital workspace?

When designing a digital workspace it is important to research what your staff members need. That's why we previously wrote an article about the [11 components of an ideal digital workspace for education](#). Additionally, we surveyed the teachers to give you a view on what topics are most important to them.

What do teachers want in their digital workspace?

One of the main reasons teachers want to use a digital workspace, is because they find it very important to have a well-organised portal. They want to be able to quickly find information and they want to be able to easily communicate with and report to students. Furthermore, they shared that they want it to be accessible anywhere.



What do teachers want to have available anytime and anywhere?

As seen above, teachers want a well-organised workspace where they can easily find the right information. Having all of this in one portal will help them to navigate more quickly. But what information is most important to access on any device?

- Timetables
- Submissions to courses
- Grades
- Absences

Advice for school leadership teams

Ask some of your teachers to show their timetable on different devices. Can they quickly see who is absent from any device? Are they able to easily report grades? Test your current digital environment across devices, note what seems to be broken and validate if people want it to be fixed.

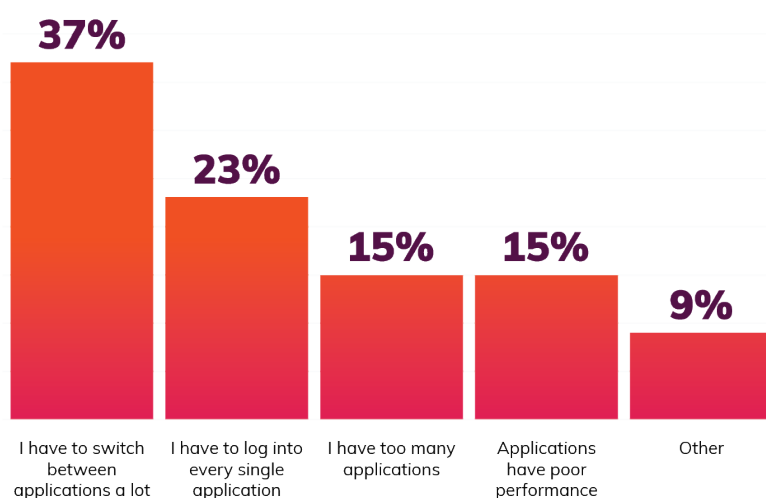
4. Frustrations with the digital workspace

According to the survey, teachers also have a lot of frustrations regarding their current digital workspace. To find out which steps you can take to make their life easier we tried to discover the biggest pain points.

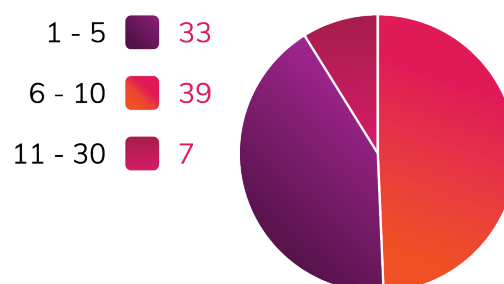
Rise of the cloud: There's an app for that

With the rise of the cloud and SaaS more and more applications are available for specific goals. That is why teachers use a lot of applications on a daily basis. While the minority uses up to 5 applications (42%), the majority (49%) of the teachers use 6 to 10 applications, or even 11 to 30 applications (9%) on a daily basis.

What is/are your biggest frustration(s) regarding applications?



How many different applications do you use on a daily basis?



Biggest frustration according to teachers

The biggest frustrations they have is that they have to switch between applications a lot, frequently having to log in again, they have too many applications and they have a lot of applications that perform poorly.

In a previous article we highlighted that [switching between applications can cause people to waste up to an hour a day](#). That is why we would recommend to see if there are steps you can take to help teachers switch less and work more.

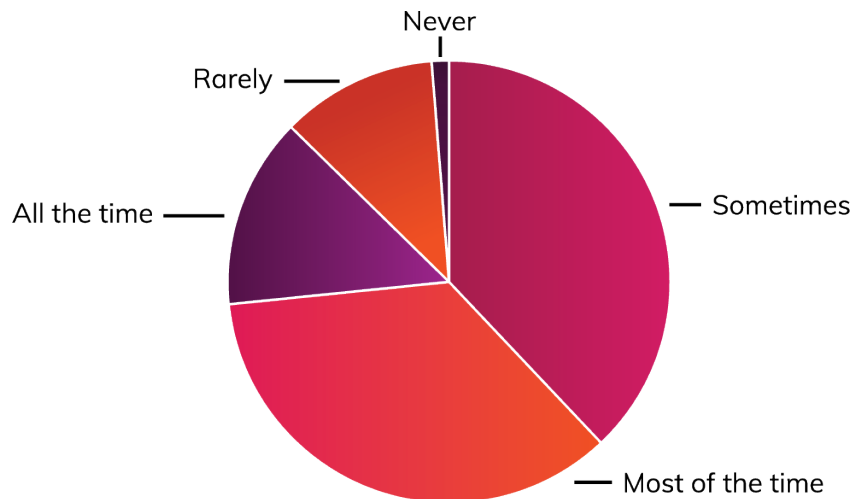
Advice for school leadership teams

Are you thinking of implementing yet another tool? See if you can already use your existing tool stack to solve the challenge that you came across. Discuss it with Application Managers to make sure that you don't introduce another application to manage and access. Implementing another tool introduces another point of vulnerability for your cyber security and will increase the amount of times that people have to switch between applications.

5. Signing in to educational applications

If switching between applications already is time consuming, imagine the impact of having to log in to all those applications. It appears that not all universities, colleges, and schools [implemented Single Sign-On](#) yet. From all respondents 38% mentioned that they sometimes have to log in to each application separately, while 14% has to login each time and 35,4% mentioned that they have to log in most of the time.

Do you have to log into each application separately?



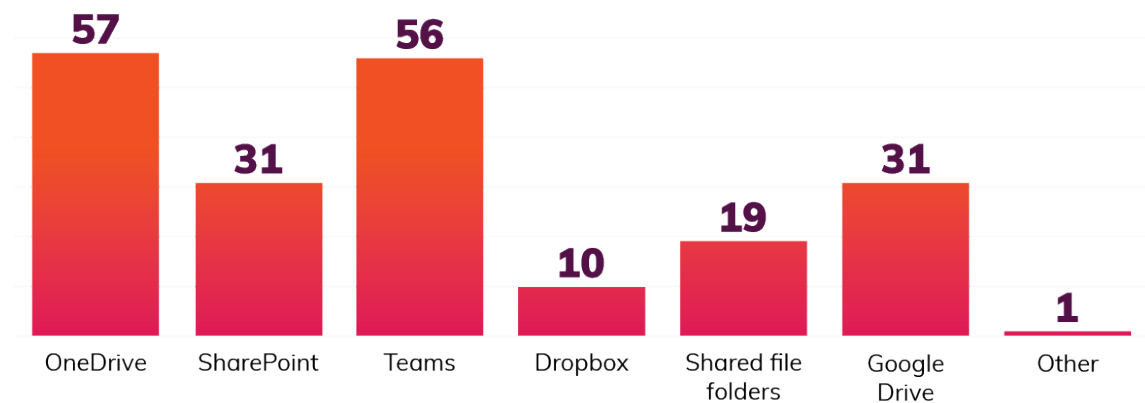
Advice for school leadership teams

There are many [tools available that will allow you to set up Single Sign-On](#) or as mentioned previously, it may even be better to do research to see if you can reduce the amount of applications. We highly recommend setting up Single Sign-On to all your applications to reduce the risk of people writing down passwords on sticky notes or using the same password for all their applications.

6. Storing documents in the digital workspace

Educational institutions in the United Kingdom mostly use Microsoft solutions to store documents. However, there are also educational institutions that still use the file server or Google Drive to access documents.

Which document storage(s) do you use business-wise?



Using multiple storage locations may be a bad idea

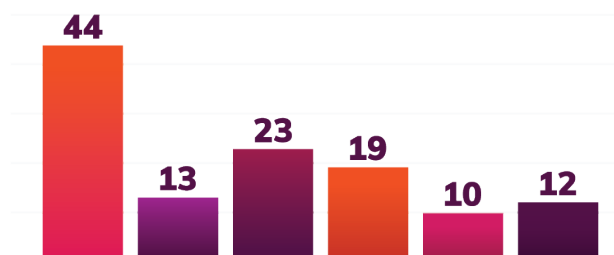
One in ten teachers don't think it's clear where they have stored their documents. That's why we've also asked what their biggest frustrations are regarding document management.

84% of the teachers mentioned that they have too many sources where they can save their documents as the biggest frustration. This means that they constantly need to look for the right document and sometimes they can't even find the document anymore.

We can imagine why that's a huge frustration and that it prevents teachers from doing their jobs efficiently. We've written an article about [storing online and offline documents](#) and which challenges you can solve by using a Document Management System.

What is/are your biggest frustration(s) in regard to document management?

- I have too many sources where I can save my documents
- I'm not able to access my documents from any device
- I don't know where I have saved my documents
- It's hard to collaborate in documents
- It's difficult to share documents
- Other



“I want a better organisation of documents so that they can be easily and quickly retrieved when needed. The more work that I do, the harder this becomes. As a result, there have been times where I have had to recreate work because I haven't been able to find the original document”

Teacher @ Inspiration Trust

Advice for school leadership teams

Ask the Information or IT leaders to share which document solutions are officially used by staff members. Discuss with your team, or external IT service providers, if it is possible to fully migrate to one storage solution. If that is not possible, investigate if it would be beneficial to use a Document Management Solution in which your storage remains the same, but which unites the visual representation.

1/10

teachers don't think it's clear where they have stored documents

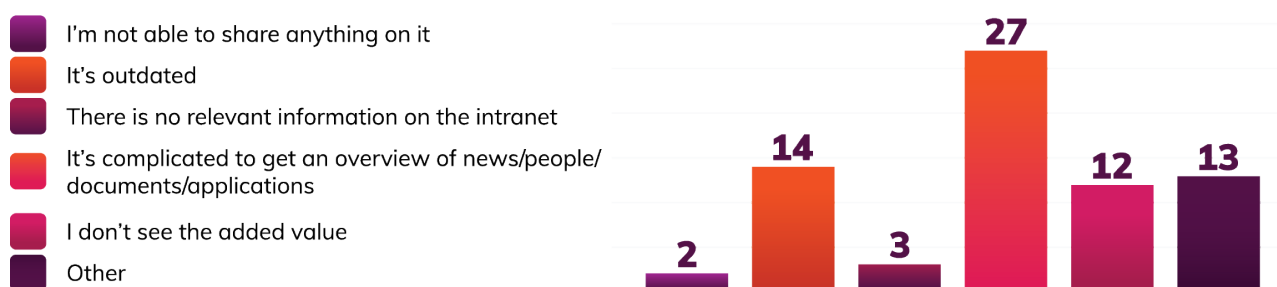


7. The intranet: a place where you can find information?

Teachers want to have a place where they can easily share information with their students and find information themselves. A tool which is often used to enable this, is the intranet. In most organisations this is managed by communicators. However, with the rise of the digital workspace we see that the intranet is sometimes owned by information managers.

What frustrations do teachers have with the intranet?

From the survey, teachers of 55 educational institutions mentioned they already use an intranet, but half of them use it rarely or never. The three biggest reasons for this are because they think it's too complicated to get a clear overview of their news, people, documents and applications, their intranet is outdated or they don't see any added value of the intranet.



One central location to communicate with students

It's important to take the intranet within education to the next level, for example by [integrating the intranet in the digital workspace or by moving completely to a modern workspace](#). Why? Because they have many things in common. Both platforms are aimed to improve the engagement and employee experience within your institution.

The digital workspace allows teachers to collaborate in documents and find the information they need, while intranets are focused on increasing engagement and improving the organisational culture. By combining these two platforms, you'll enable teachers to focus on their work and allow them to share information with students in the same platform where people come to access documents and find information.

Advice for school leadership teams

Many organisations have projects in both the IT and Communication department that focus on the same goals. That is why some organisations have a Chief Digital Officer.

We have seen many organisations work on a new intranet, new application portal and new dashboarding software. We would recommend to see if there are digital projects that are aimed to solve the same goals or strategic priorities of your organisation.

	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
10AM	HW	HW					
11AM		skype		skype			
12AM	Test		Test			Zim	

NY Sketch Book 20



About Workspace 365 for Education

Workspace 365 helped thousands of organisations to a modern digital workspace that adapts to any device, location and more. It reduces the number of times that people have to switch between applications. By conquering complexity in software, it can help you to save up to one hour per employee, per day.

We would love to learn more about your future plans and discuss your strategy to see if we can be of any value.

**Check out Workspace 365
for education**

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Workspace365