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Strengthening student engagement: evaluating the role of the digital skills agenda in higher education.

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This file includes a copy of the abstract and relevant references, followed by a copy of the full poster.

Strengthening Student Engagement: Poster Abstract

Abstract

Digital technology can contribute to all three areas of the TEF: teaching quality; learning environment; and student outcomes (Davies S, Mullan and Feldman 2017). Digital skills are helpful in designing enhanced and effective learning activities (Copley 2007), as multimedia promotes interests and engagement. It provides flexibility for students, in terms of where and when they can undertake their learning activity. It therefore improves student experience and outcomes (Davies S, Mullan and Feldman 2017). Its use enhances feedback: task feedback through online submissions; process feedback through audio and video feedbacks; and self-regulation feedback through computer simulation, as well as anonymous instructor and peer feedback (Hattie 2012). It can help in developing effective learning environments, from basic websites to augmented reality simulations (Dreyer and Nel, 2003). Therefore, in the present environment, digital agenda should be an integral part of continuing professional development (CPD).

References

Copley J. 2007, Audio and video podcasts of lectures for campus-based students: production and evaluation of student use. *Innovations in education and teaching international*, 44(4):387-399.

Davies S, Mullan J, Feldman P. 2017, *Rebooting learning for the digital age: what next for technology-enhanced higher education?* Oxford: Higher Education Policy Institute.

Dreyer C, Nel C. 2003, Social media for a learning environment: teaching reading strategies and reading comprehension within a technology-enhanced learning environment. *System*, 31(3):349-365.

Hattie J, 2012. *Visible learning for teachers: maximizing impact on learning*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Strengthening Student Engagement

Evaluating the role of the Digital Skills Agenda in Higher Education

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Background:

Digital skills are increasingly being considered as crucial in complementing essential English and Maths skills. This applies to all learners, not just those in technical education. It is underpinned by technology enhanced learning which is concerned with the application of information and communication to teaching and learning.

Digital technology can support efforts by higher education leaders and policy-makers to boost student outcomes and enrich the learning experience.

Objectives:

Identify the drivers, barriers and implications of the Digital Skills Agenda in Higher Education.

Recommend how the Digital Skills agenda can be integrated into the teaching practice of academics.

Method:

A critical review of relevant literature

DRIVERS



Government Strategy



Employer requirements



University Policy



Engaging Students

BARRIERS



Non-Transferable Skills



Age/Cost of Equipment



Accessibility for all Students



Resistance to Change

Implications for:

Teaching & supporting learning

Implications for:

Assessment & feedback

Embracing the “Digital Agenda” will enhance the student experience and can be integrated into practice on many levels and will have implications for design, planning, assessment and feedback.

Effective planning and design will help to create a more fluid and engaging student experience.

The accessibility and flexibility allow the student to study how, when and where they want.

Integrating articulate, ponopto, mentimeter, quizlet and digital media allow students to tailor their experience to their preferred learning styles.

Assessment and Feedback will be enhanced on three levels:

- 1 E- Management and online submissions will facilitate faster marking and feedback for tasks.
- 2 The use of virtual classrooms, flipped learning and personalised audio/video feedback will improve the student experience through accessibility and diversity.
- 3 Self-regulated feedback can be enhanced with the use of anonymous peer feedback and computer simulations.

The flexible use of online resources will result in a richer classroom experience as lectures and students will be able to maximise the use of the face-to-face time.

recommendations

- 1 Digital technology should be recognised as a key tool for higher education
- 2 Effective use of technology for learning and teaching should be built into curriculum design processes (eg. e-Learning, digital portfolios, augmented reality (AR), simulations, digital games)
- 3 Develop an evidence and knowledge base on what works in technology enhanced learning to help universities, faculties and course teams to make informed decisions
- 4 Higher education institutions should ensure that the digital agenda is being led at senior levels and should embed digital capabilities into recruitment, staff development, appraisal, reward and recognition
- 5 Academic leads for learning and teaching should embrace technology enhanced learning and the digital environment and recognise the relationship with other aspects of learning and teaching
- 6 Do further research (educational researchers) to explore how the technology enhanced learning and learning analytics together can provide new insights into the teaching and learning