

Digital Literacy – What is it and how is it achieved?

Digital Literacy is a prerequisite for engaging in our open and global educational environment. For universities to operate effectively and critically in this constantly evolving environment and to provide enhanced and engaged learning, teaching and research experiences, staff and students need to be agile and confident in their engagement with technology, while universities need strategies and operational plans that embed literacy within core systems and processes.

1. What capabilities are needed?

- a. Manage all administration and education activities online
- b. Influence people at a distance
- c. Use digital tools to enhance cognitive outcomes in formal and informal learning
- d. Focus on outcomes e.g. online collaboration, production, assimilation, not tools
- e. Interact with technology on a constant, creative, confident and critical basis
- f. Adopt new technologies with ease
- g. Develop and manage a meaningful digital identity

If technology is good enough, digital literacy is not an issue! Maslow's hierarchy of needs for the digital age includes WiFi at the bottom of the triangle!

2. What challenges are faced in developing them?

[A quick quiz](#) on student digital life.

- a. Decision-making skills; knowing which tool is best for a task and if a source is reliable
- b. Staff are content experts but maybe not most competent in digital literacy.
- c. Students have difficulty in transposing social literacy skills into educational settings.
- d. Role reversal in some areas – students contribute and staff facilitate learning partnerships
- e. Distance students need support to learn new tools
- f. Libraries and lecturers used to select tools, now learners can choose their own – and the range is confusing –some traditional roles have value and learners need good guidance
- g. Separation of digital literacies and course content is unhelpful – integration is required
- h. Negative messages around plagiarism but not the positive messages from sharing and collaborating

JISC project resources: Developing digital skills for scholars -

<http://jiscdesignstudio.pbworks.com/w/page/46421608/Developing%20digital%20literacies>

3. How can universities advance digital literacy?

What = infrastructure and intention expressed as strategies and plans

How = operationalise and implement – build capacity and staff capability

Leadership - leaders know where the institution is going, why and how to promote digital literacy.

Readiness – organisation is mature, flexible, open and actively promotes excellence and innovation.

Good things take time – monitor response, reaction, resistance (relative to the driver of change) and build resilience.

Harness the energy - build on existing pockets of innovation, networks and active groups of staff.

Belief in the purpose - know what motivates people and where they find purpose; promote autonomy.

Clarity and credibility – let people understand the process and value proposition - uncertainty is a threat.

Organisational culture- staff are business literate, empowered to act and challenge the status quo.

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- Manage all activities online
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- Use digital tools in formal and informal learning
- Focus on outcomes not tools
- Confident, creative interaction with technology
- Adopt new technologies with ease
- Manage a meaningful digital identity

- Knowing which tool is best for a task and if a source is reliable
- Staff are content experts but maybe not competent in digital literacy
- Student difficulty in transposing social literacy skills into educational settings
- Role reversal – students contribute and staff facilitate learning partnerships
- Students need support to learn new tools
- Separation of digital literacies and course content unhelpful
- -ve messages around plagiarism versus +ve messages from sharing and collaborating

- Leadership to promote digital literacy
- Organisational readiness
- Good things take time
- Build on existing pockets of innovation
- Belief in the purpose
- Clarity and credibility
- Organisational culture

4. Cool tools – beyond the LMS

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| http://www.usq.edu.au/apps/edtechmatrix/ USQ educational tools matrix | www.polleverywhere.com Live audience participation |
| www.padlet.com Shared whiteboard for files and information | www.vialogues.com Meaningful discussion linked to video |
| http://daviddarts.com/piratebox-diy-openwrt/ Pirate Box DIY hardware solution to sharing files from the internet | https://www.uservice.com/g/ User feedback and support tool |
| http://ed.ted.com/ Create and share learning activities around a Ted Talk or YouTube video | http://www.ucroo.com.au/ or www.yammer.com Institutional social networks |
| http://www.scoop.it/ Curated collections to engage an audience | https://badges.mozilla.org/en-US/ Badges to acknowledge learner achievement |

5. **Recordings and presentation notes** from the March 2014 ACODE64 Workshop on Digital Literacy are available at <http://www.acode.edu.au/mod/url/view.php?id=192>