

MANCHESTER
1824

The University of Manchester

The University of Manchester

Institute of Teaching and Learning

DR JANE MOONEY SUPPORTING DIGITAL CAPABILITIES

ITL FELLOWSHIP 2020/21
PROJECT
REPORT



ITL Fellow 2020/21

DR JANE MOONEY

Jane is a teaching-focused Senior Lecturer in the Division of Medical Education in the Faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health. Her areas of interest include supporting student and staff digital capabilities and the applications of playful learning in HE.

Fellowship Student Partner Interns

TIFFANY GRIFFITHS
CHIAMAKA ANOLIEFO

UNDERSTANDING AND SUPPORTING DIGITAL LITERACY IN THE CURRICULUM

ITL Fellowship project

This digital literacy project focused on helping students and staff to understand and articulate their digital skills, and on supporting teaching leaders to embed relevant digital skills provision within programmes.

Context

Digital capabilities are defined by Jisc as those required to "live, learn and work in a digital society", and the intentions behind this Fellowship were to support student and staff digital capabilities. In addition to demands from professions, employers and industries, the University's vision for Our Future sets a clear, supportive agenda around this.

A more comprehensive introduction to digital capabilities can be found on the Digital Capabilities Effective Practice Hub.

Objectives of the Fellowship project

The initial aims of this project were to:

- raise awareness and build confidence around digital capabilities, supporting students and staff
 - provide support for staff to enhance and embed opportunities with programmes of study
 - provide and signpost to resources supporting further development, as appropriate
-

Project activities

Review of Unit Survey data

Unit Survey data related to supporting the student digital experience was reviewed and thematically analysed by Tiffany and needs related to digital learning identified. These are being used to inform further work to support students and staff.

Supporting Programme staff to enhance and embed support for digital capabilities within the curriculum

The offer to support to enhance and embed digital capabilities support within the curriculum was cascaded to the 3 Faculties and resources to support staff were created and added to the Digital Capabilities Effective Practice Hub. The implementation of these approaches is currently being piloted by colleagues. An ongoing offer of support around embedding digital capabilities within the curriculum is available through the Institute of Teaching and Learning (ITL).

Mapping of resources to support student and staff digital capabilities

In addition to working with the Institute to support SPIs attaining Associate Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy, Chiamaka also completed mapping exercises of resources to support student and staff capabilities.

This work will inform student- and staff-facing resources that will be further developed as part of the Flexible Learning Programme.

Development of supportive resources around digital wellbeing

Digital wellbeing is one of the six 'elements' that constitutes digital capabilities. Recognising a need for digital wellbeing support, a workshop was created and offered to all University staff. This has been well received and continues to be offered through the Institute.

An online resource to scaffold digital wellbeing discussions with students was created and added to the Digital Capabilities Effective Practice Hub and a student-facing version of this was created with colleagues from the Library and published through My Learning Essentials.

Links to both of these online resources have been added to the wellbeing section of the Academic Advising toolkit. The MLE resource was shared with University Student Support and included within the Winter 2020 Assessment Support package published by the Library, which programmes could embed within Blackboard.

Challenges faced

While the arrival of the pandemic impacted / delayed the implementation of some areas and reduced staff capacity to be able to engage with activities, work is ongoing within the Flexible Learning Programme to continue to address the project's aims.

Student partnership

Chiamaka:

Working as a Student Partner Intern on the Digital Capabilities project was a challenging but rewarding experience, which helped me develop my time-management, organisational and communication skills. The role involved carrying out a literature search to explore and identify potential barriers students might be facing when it comes to collaborating online. This activity then helped with identifying additional support resources students need to make to most of their peers in an online learning environment. Furthermore, I had the opportunity to familiarise myself with the JISC digital capabilities framework, and its six elements, and used this to complete mapping documents to support student and staff capabilities. Moreover, I also had the opportunity to work with the Institute and with regard to the LEAP programme, provide a student's perspective and first impressions on the UKPSF.

Collaborative work

Throughout the Fellowship, and enabled by it, many conversations and collaborations with colleagues have informed and continue to progress this work. In addition to the support received from Tiffany and Chiamaka, Lisa McDonagh (Teaching and Learning Adviser, ITL) and the wider Institute network, the following collaborations facilitated the outputs listed below:

- the Digital Capabilities Effective Practice Hub was collaboratively created with an operational working group as part of an FBMH pilot.
- the digital wellbeing staff workshops were co-created and are co-delivered with Dr Sarah Shepherd.
- working with colleagues from the Library was essential to creating the student-facing digital wellbeing online resource.
- joining the Academic Advising Task and Finish group enabled me to be part of conversations and contribute resources for the toolkit.

Collaborative work with staff and students will continue to further work to support digital capabilities.

Outputs

Embedding digital capabilities in the curriculum

The Digital Capabilities Effective Practice Hub has supportive resources for staff. In addition to introductory materials, an approach to embedding / enhancing digital capabilities in the curriculum is outlined there. If you would like support to implement some or all of the approaches outlined, please get in touch.

Digital wellbeing

- Student-facing digital wellbeing online resource
- Scaffolding for digital wellbeing discussions with students (online resources)
- Book on a digital wellbeing staff workshop

We were invited to share this work at Jisc's Joint building digital capability and digital experience insights community of practice event in May 2021.

Impact

As mentioned above, colleagues are piloting the approaches to embedding digital capabilities in the curriculum. Their evaluation of this process will be essential to its refinement - the intention being to provide as supportive, streamlined and helpful a process as possible for those who wish to implement it.

Reflection

While the scope of the project necessarily narrowed due to the pandemic, I feel we were still able to find helpful ways to contribute. We were able to provide support for staff around digital wellbeing at a time when it was needed and welcomed. We were also able to create resources to support student digital wellbeing. Student support is going to be further extended in 2021/2022 through a new collaboration with the University's Peer Support Team that will, hopefully, see digital wellbeing support cascaded through the Peer Support network.

Next steps

Supporting student and staff digital capabilities will continue to be championed through the Flexible Learning Programme.

If you have any queries or would like to talk about digital capabilities, [please get in touch](#).

Dr Jane Mooney
July 2021
