

DIGITAL CAPABILITIES CASE STUDY

EMBEDDING DIGITAL CAPABILITIES INTO A NEW UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMME



[https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/
/umitl/resources/delivering-blended-
learning/digital-capabilities/](https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/umitl/resources/delivering-blended-learning/digital-capabilities/)



teaching.learning@manchester.ac.uk

Purpose

This case study demonstrates different ways that a new undergraduate programme has embedded digital capabilities into the curriculum using different approaches taken from the Supporting student digital capability development resource.

Context/Scope

The BSc Public Health is a brand-new undergraduate programme that launches in September 2022. The course can be taken on campus or online (or a combination of both). All course content will be delivered online, and all assessments will be in a digital format, moving away from traditional essays to better reflect the skills required in the workplace e.g., presentation skills, digital collaboration etc. Therefore, the digital capabilities of students and staff is a key factor in the success of this new programme.

The team recognised the importance of embedding digital skills into the programme right from the start of the course to prepare students for their future employability by developing a skill set that will enable them to thrive in an increasingly digital world. The team also recognised the role in upskilling the digital capabilities of staff to provide students with the confidence and language to recognise the digital skills they are acquiring throughout their studies.

Intended Outcomes

1. Map digital capabilities within the curriculum using Jisc's 'Learner Role Profile' to programme learning activities
 2. Create a shared language for online assessment using the ILOs from the mapping exercise so that students and staff can recognise the digital skills they are acquiring
 3. Embed the Jisc Digital Discovery Tool into the Student Development Programme starting in Welcome and Induction Week through to Graduation
 4. Enhance staff digital capabilities through the Jisc Digital Discovery tool
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The process, including practical advice about how to implement, resources needed, etc.

The first step was to look at Jisc's 'Learner Role Profile' for students. This was a useful exercise to become familiar with digital capabilities terminology and examples. It's important to note that no individual will have all these digital capabilities and they may not all be relevant to the programme. The next step was to use the template provided to personalise the digital capabilities so that they were relevant to the programme. Once this exercise had been completed, it was possible to start mapping the capabilities against the programme activities. This was useful exercise to identify gaps and iteratively add or remove capabilities based on the Learner Profile as more activities were identified. This provided a document that could easily align activities with digital capabilities programme wide.

This exercise helped create a shared language for online assessment to help students recognise the digital skills that they are acquiring throughout the programme. For example, students will be required to submit recorded presentations as their assessment and the Jisc Learner Tool helped create the vocabulary to demonstrate their digital capabilities in this task. This was then created as a labelled graphic in Rise to demonstrate the capabilities against the framework. As students progress through the programme, this can be adapted to show higher level digital and learning skills.

Alongside these activities, the Jisc Digital Discovery Tool for students is embedded into the Student Development Programme (SDP). The SDP sits alongside the undergraduate curriculum and delivers personal development sessions to all students from induction to graduation. Within this programme is a 'Digital Capabilities strand' that is embedded throughout the three years of study. In the first year, students will be given time in the SDP to complete the questionnaires in the Jisc Digital Discovery Tool to self-assess their own digital capabilities. They will then have the opportunity to follow up on their individual reports with their personal academic advisors. There will also be group activities based on the outcomes of the collective reports. Students will build on the outcomes of the report each year to demonstrate gains in their capabilities as well as suggesting areas for improvement. By the third year, the 'Digital Capabilities strand' will focus on linking digital capabilities to Public Health graduate outcomes. These sessions will look at what digital skills students will need as public health professionals to succeed in their careers and practical ways to acquire those skills. For example, the NHS has its own Digital Capabilities Framework that has been developed to support the improvement of the digital capabilities of staff working in health and care and will help further contextualise digital skills to public health graduates.

Finally, the programme team will be given an opportunity to explore the Jisc Digital Discovery Tool for themselves to benchmark their own capabilities. All staff at the University can access three themed questionnaires within the Discovery tool: 'Explore your overall digital capabilities'; 'Accessibility and Inclusion' and 'Effective online teaching'. Based on the needs of the programme, the teaching team will be encouraged to complete the 'Effective online teaching' questionnaire. Once they complete the questionnaire, they will find curated resources to support their digital skills development. It will also be a useful exercise to enhance vocabulary and understanding of digital capabilities when interacting with students on the programme and to support new and flexible ways of working and teaching such as hybrid, hyflex etc.

Benefits/Challenges

One of the benefits of using the available tools in the [Support Student Digital Capability resource](#) is that they provide a common language for students and staff to talk about their digital capabilities. It helps to identify digital practice within the curriculum and develop appropriate and helpful terminology when talking about those practices. Developing this vocabulary is especially important for students as they enter their future workplace and need to demonstrate their skills to future employers. Another added benefit of using the tools is that they focus on practical ways to improve in a positive manner that is encouraging for both students and staff, which can help build confidence over time.

It can be challenging to add digital capabilities into the curriculum if it is seen as something extra to do for students and staff. Therefore, it is best to find ways to build it into the curriculum so that it is embedded rather than bolted on.













Quick Wins

1. Encourage students to explore their digital capabilities using the [Jisc Discovery Tool available via My Learning Essentials](#). Get students to do this every year and they can compare their reports to self-assess and identify learning gaps.
 2. Get your team to complete the [Jisc Discovery Tool for Staff](#). Staff will get an individual report to help them identify and reflect on the areas they would like to develop further.
 3. Explore different approaches and ideas to embed Digital Capabilities in the curriculum via the [Support Student Digital Capability resource](#).
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Longer-term Goals

Once the programme has launched, the team intend to analyse and expand on the support for digital capabilities provision in the curriculum via a student workshop. The workshop is based on the [Jisc Roadmap tool](#) and will help to identify areas of good practice and aspects of provision that can be improved within the programme. The tool's rubric can help guide the programme's longer-term goals to enhance practice from a benchmark provision.

Which of the '6 elements' from the Jisc Building Digital Capability Framework does this case study relate to?

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ICT Proficiency 
- 
Information, data and media literacies 
- 
Digital identity and wellbeing 
- 
Digital learning and development 
- 
Digital creation, problem solving and innovation 
- 
Digital communication, collaboration and participation 

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Relevant links to elearning or other training/resources

Example of using the ILOs from the mapping exercise to create a shared language for students and staff around online assessment

<https://rise.articulate.com/share/azY6cZqzqgs5WsgDKMglrQuqbT1CskfB>

Author/s

Catherine Wasiuk and Helen Davidson

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