Digital capability: an organisational agenda
Community of Practice Launch, May 2017

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Where has this agenda come from?

- Growing international activity e.g. EU, UNESCO, CoL, NMC...
- Centrally funded initiatives in the UK e.g. FutureLab, TRLP/TEL, Jisc DDL, FELTAG...
- Since 2015: ‘staff digital capabilities’ a top priority for Jisc (via institutional contacts)
Why is this an agenda in education now?

- student expectations
- student employability
- external metrics (TEF, NSS, OfStEd, KIS, area reviews...)
- expansion into new markets
- organisational effectiveness
- human capacity building
- zeitgeist? (Jisc, QAA, ETF, FELTAG, UCISA, HEA...)
• self-perpetuating agenda?
• human capacity building?
The context is changing profoundly ... and profoundly changed by digital technology.
Changes in subjects taught
new methods, questions, specialisms, practices, representations...

... making universities/colleges key sites of digital innovation
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Changes in learner practices, experiences and expectations

jiscinvolve.digitalstudent.org
Changes in learner practices, experiences and expectations

- personal devices, media, networks, cultures of use
- blurring of information and communication practices
- continuous connection, recording and sharing
- modes of attention
- frictionless adoption, rapid feedback
- preferences for visual media
Learner identities are produced in ‘our’ digital systems

- registration
- learning pathways
- virtual learning environment
- assessment and grading (HEAR)
- library system
- development office...
Changing organisations (the ‘digital university’ or ‘connected college’)

- Distributed
- Dependent on digital data & systems
- Offering alternative modes of learning
- *In competition with* alternative modes of learning
- Meeting new external demands (e.g. skills for a digital economy)
- Monitored/regulated in new ways
Changes in educational work

Digital dreams...

• More productive, efficient, creative
• More flexible ways of working
• Teaching/scholarship beyond the walls
• New personal capabilities and interests

Digital anxieties...

Changing relationships with students and colleagues
New metrics and monitoring: KPIs, citation indices, NSS...
‘Always on’: never offline/unavailable/unseen
Uncertain time/place of work
New ways to fail e.g. copyright, IT skills, online exposure

CC Latrell G: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCMWPLYKFLAVGSuTFCbj2kGQ

• Casualisation and precarity (Standing)
• Disaggregation of professional roles (Coppola)
• Constant restructuring and reskilling
• Automation ('Digital Taylorism' - the potential to standardise and automate intellectual labour - 'rises up the value chain': Brown et al. 2015)
And even beyond work...?
And even beyond work...?
“Program or be programmed”  
(Douglas Rushkoff 2013)

Be conscious and pro-active in the changing digital world,  
or be a victim of it.
Who is responsible? Who is empowered?

6 Ways To Improve Your LinkedIn Profile

Weigh Your Mind
Who is responsible for: 

*the capacity to thrive (live, learn and work) in a digital world?*
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Foundational, essential, lifelong and lifewide:
‘literacies’ are both individual and social responsibilities

Learning Literacies for a Digital Age (LLiDA)

Welcome to the LLiDA project, funded by the JISC. This is a six-month study (1st August 2008 - end January 2009) into learning literacies in UK HE and FE, which we are defining as “the range of practices that underpin effective learning in a digital age”.

From this page you can link to:

- Further information about the study;
- Information for institutional auditors;
- Information about our call for best practice exemplars;
- Partner networks and related events;
- 'Learning literacies' resources and background studies;
- An Inquiries e-form;
- A Project WIKI, where tools and outcomes will be shared as they develop
Who is responsible for: the capacity to thrive (live, learn and work) in a digital world?

- **Capability** as a broader term than literacy
- Theories of human development (Sen, Nussbaum)
- Not personal, intrinsic abilities but capacity to act in a situation (‘knowledge inside and outside the brain...’)

Who is responsible for: the capacity to thrive (live, learn and work) in a digital world?
Digital capabilities framework - since 2010

- Data literacy
- Expanded idea of ‘innovation’
- Digital well-being with digital identity (authentic, embodied self)
- Developing others
- Applicable to all
Digital capabilities framework - organisational

- Digital environment supportive of development
- Roles, rules, rewards, recognition
- Safety to innovate (walled gardens with pathways out)
Organisational responses

- Cross-boundary working groups
- Frameworks adapted/co-created by staff and students
- Profiles: recognition of new roles/responsibilities + mapping to existing professional requirements
- Meaningful outcomes for students (curricular and co-curricular)
- Digital badges, digital missions: make the mandatory more fun
- Staff/student SIGs and events on digital issues (formal/informal)
- Self-assessment and personal development planning (appraisal?)
- Digital environments & policies that support: identity work, sharing & collaboration, low-risk experimentation, social belonging
- Leadership development; students as change agents
“It’s not just the same organisation with more skilled people in it, it’s a different organisation.”

LT Manager, University of Lincoln

“I think it’s always with us because innovation is always with us... the technology will change, but people will continue to need support to engage confidently with innovation.”

Principal Lecturer, University of Brighton

“Digital capability is a key skill for the current and future of our young people. It is at the heart of transformation of learning and enables learners to maximise their success”

CEO & Principal, Epping Forest College

Your contributions: #digicap
More about this today

- **Using the resources** we have, and developing more:
  - frameworks, profiles, guides, case studies, organisational change materials, curriculum change materials, self-development resources...

- **Sharing ideas and practice** across organisations and roles

- **Meeting** at events and in virtual networks (which ones??)

- **Making connections** with other agendas and professional bodies