*Abstract: Developing institutional digital literacy through a technology-rich Postgraduate Certificate curriculum: An evolving initiative.*

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This paper reports on the innovative redesign of a Postgraduate Certificate programme and presents the conclusions and recommendations arising from this ongoing process. Now in its third year of delivery, the new programme incorporates mandatory use of blogs, online peer-assessed group work and the production of online video summaries. The aim of incorporating these elements is to increase teachers’ competence and confidence in the use of specific technologies appropriate to the teaching of their discipline, to inculcate a positive attitude towards experimenting with technology, and ultimately to improve the student experience across the institution.

The curriculum redesign process has been informed by previous research on digital literacy development, the use of specific Web 2.0 technologies in higher education, and the role of summative assessment as a driver for learning. A benchmarking of current practice on UK-based academic staff development programmes revealed that an embedded approach to teaching about technology-enhanced learning – although considered by many as a goal to aim for – was the exception rather than the norm.

During the study, course participants were required to complete a series of collaborative reading, writing and reflection activities on their individual blogs, and to produce a short video summary of their teaching development project outcomes to be uploaded to the University’s OER database.

The first cycle of implementation produced strong evidence of raised technical competence and confidence across the cohort, both in the use of appropriate software and hardware, and in the sharing and discussion of practice and learning in an online space. Further exploration through feedback surveys enabled measurement of impact on participants’ attitudes to learning technologies, on their current teaching practice and on their future plans.  
  
The responses to the feedback surveys also revealed what aspects of the technological elements of the course participants found most challenging or frustrating. This information had clear implications for subsequent cycles and enabled the identification of recommendations for future delivery of the programme, all of which were put into practice and progressed further over the following two years. The experience of running this programme over three years has enabled us to develop techniques and strategies including:

* Techniques to encourage the building of positive online and offline working relationships
* Strategies to prepare participants for effective online groupwork and open practice
* Finding a balance between explicit technical training and embedded skill development
* How (and why) to incorporate synchronous online events
* Strategies to address the specific challenges faced by dyslexic students doing online activities
* Techniques (and free tools) to facilitate efficient and effective peer and self assessment

These will be of interest to others designing blended or online programmes, and of particular value to those leading and teaching on Academic Practice programmes for teaching staff.