

Developing digital confidence through authentic tasks

This exemplar is relevant to Digital Student challenge:

Prepare and support students to study successfully with digital technologies

Incoming students on the BA Health and Social Care at Nottingham Trent University complete a year-long digital skills module, starting pre-induction with an online survey to assess their current levels of confidence. As they progress through the year they receive a variety of assignments, each incorporating an element of self-assessment and reflection. Skills covered during the module vary according to students' needs, but have included basic VLE navigation, use of Googledocs for group work, social bookmarking, sharing ideas on discussion boards, creating MS Office documents, sending attachments by email, and generating images to share via social media. Students who need to have opportunities to familiarise themselves with both keyboard/mouse and touchpad interfaces. The 'ScaleUp' classroom where this takes place has laptops available, as well as support for students using their own devices. There is one-to-one support from tutors and plenty of opportunities for peer learning.

Students undertake authentic, meaningful assignments from the beginning. Within the first four weeks of term, for example, they might be asked to build an online slide show (open access) or a simple video that explores and expresses their professional values. This task requires a number of skills, from downloading, saving and uploading images (and sometimes sounds), through generating video or animations, to understanding Creative Commons licenses and avoiding copyright violations.

How does this meet the challenge?

- Students begin learning how to work effectively in groups.
- Students can use basic digital techniques in support of their learning:
'We sometimes blithely assume that most students can easily tackle all of these processes, but I have spent a lot of time in the workshops sitting alongside some as they struggle with these tasks, often for the first time.'
- Students undertake authentic digital tasks that are reflective, self-evaluative, and clearly linked to their aspirations and identity.
- Students have access to support in one time and place, with technical and academic issues integrated.

Find out more

- [Jane Challinor's blog](#)

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