
Digital student exemplars

Enhancing the digital experience of students

This case study is relevant to the digital student challenge:

Deliver a robust, flexible, digital environment

Encouraging use of mobile devices at East Berkshire College

East Berkshire College implemented a mobile device strategy at the start of the 2013 academic year. The aims were to:

- » Empower students and staff for flexible, personalised and collaborative learning that could take place at anytime and anywhere by providing open and independent access to high-end mobile devices, like Microsoft Surface Pro 3, iPad Air.
- » Prepare students for 21st century jobs by developing their knowledge and ability to use these devices to improve their employability skills

As part of the strategy, the college set key targets for achievement by 2015/16. These include:

- » More than 81% of the classrooms will have high-end mobile devices. Based on analysis as to which devices the college felt would best suit their learners' needs, the decision was made to purchase Microsoft Surface Pro 2 and 3 tablets. The college now has 450 of these devices and over than 250 iPad tablets available for use
- » Replacing all curriculum staff desktop computers with the high specification mobile devices like the Microsoft Surface Pro 3.
- » All curriculum areas and learning resource centres (LRCs) will have intelligent self-service lockers equipped with mobile technologies to encourage users to make the most of mobile technologies, provide ease of access and promote independent learning. So far, over 300 Traka intelligent self-service lockers have been installed at both campuses in seven locations. Each locker contains either a Microsoft surface pro 3 device or an iPad. These devices are free to use on a first-come-first served basis and the college is developing a system that will allow advanced block-bookings.

Initial training was provided for staff on the use of the new devices and systems supplemented by staff surgery sessions. The ILT content developers have extended the training to help staff and students.

The college has upgraded the Wi-Fi network to Cisco Gigabit wireless network technology to ensure there is sufficient capacity to service the bandwidth required for these devices and the expected increase in use of bring your own and college-provided devices. The college currently has wireless coverage at both their campuses in

Langley and Windsor. The legitimate use of wireless connections is encouraged by enabling automated log on for validated devices to the network.

How does this meet the challenge?

- » The focus on mobile devices gives learners experience in using industry-standard devices and helps to develop digital literacy skills, particularly in use of mobile technologies
- » The commitment to purchase devices for both students and staff goes some way towards providing equality of access to resources and in making these available through the locker scheme; addressing potential barriers for those who may not have access to personal mobile devices
- » Learning spaces are being redesigned to accommodate the lockers and to encourage greater use of mobile devices and informal learning areas have been created around the college to encourage learners to collaborate in a relaxed learning environment
- » The vision for mobile technologies is strategic and is underpinned by formal strategies to:
 - › Increase the network capacity and provide access to networks and power across all sites
 - › Drive the procurement process and develop appropriate policies for use
 - › Provide access to mobile technologies for students and staff with responsive support

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