

# Digital student exemplars

## Enhancing the digital experience of students

This case study is relevant to the digital student challenges:

- » **Deliver a relevant digital curriculum**
- » **Deliver a robust, flexible, digital environment**
- » **Support students and staff to work successfully with digital technologies**

## Encouraging use of mobile and interactive technologies in the iZone at Redbridge College

The **iZone** was launched in November 2013 to enhance the digital experience of further education learners at **Redbridge College**. The iZone is a flexible learning centre equipped with mobile and interactive technologies including: iPads, Surface RTs, Apple TVs, large interactive touchscreens and touch-enabled PCs.

Learners and staff members in the college can book learning suites and devices in the iZone – all of which are fully supported by the college's e-learning team and a technician based within the centre. Learners and staff can also ask for advice on how to effectively use technology to improve their existing teaching and learning practices (see case study 1).

One of the ways that staff and learners are benefitting from the facilities in the iZone is by using the video booth and an internal media server to be more creative in the way that learners produce assignments (see case study 2), and staff produce assignment feedback (see case study 3) and online resources. This also supports inclusion by facilitating a broader range of options for assignment submission.



*One of the suites in the iZone at Redbridge College*

*"This year, the iZone has empowered the faculty in using interactive learning technologies effectively inside and out of the classroom. The iZone continues to create opportunities for the delivery of flipped lessons where learners take ownership of their own learning while developing transferable skills that they will later use in the workplace."*

Costas Calcanis, director of eLearning, innovation and IT at Redbridge College

## How does this meet some of the challenges?

- » The iZone offers learners an opportunity to experience a broader range of technologies within the curriculum including those that may be directly relevant to their chosen careers. It also encourages staff to be more creative in use of digital technologies with curriculum delivery and assessment practices
- » In terms of the environment, learners are supported and encouraged to use mobile technologies and those without personal access to a range of different technologies elsewhere are not disadvantaged as access to software, hardware and support is made available to them through the iZone. Because the iZone and the resources within it are bookable this acknowledges the need to ensure parity of provision in terms of digital resourcing across different courses and curricula
- » Students and staff are supported by having access to a range of digital technologies with readily available expert support, advice and guidance from a central team of specialists located within the iZone. Individual and group training sessions, tailored CPD programmes and eLearning mentoring are available to teaching staff within the iZone to boost e-confidence and e-maturity levels

## Case Studies:

### » Case study 1: Blending GCSE mathematics

A senior mathematics lecturer at the college identified the need for improving the way that the GCSE mathematics course was delivered. The team needed to cover the whole syllabus in one year rather than the two years allocated at the secondary level. Working with the e-learning team, a yearlong blended learning programme to teach GCSE mathematics was developed. The programme took a 'paperless' route by making effective use of the VLE; all learning resources, homework assignments and classroom content and activities were placed online. The flipped classroom model was implemented so students were introduced to key concepts through online videos and activities before lessons. Effective use was made of the iZone facilities, outside the class learners were able to use the area to complete homework tasks and during class time tablets replaced traditional pen and paper, meaning student work could be instantly captured, shared and showcased amongst the class. Online quizzes were also used heavily to provide instant feedback. The results obtained were very positive, the teachers' satisfaction was very high and the engagement of students increased significantly. Teachers received ongoing training during the academic year to create resources and implement the programme.

### » Case Study 2: Increased independence in ESOL learners

ESOL learners are encouraged to practice speaking as much English as possible, however one of the greatest obstacles to this is that many often feel uncomfortable speaking in front of their peers and others as they are embarrassed of making mistakes. In order to overcome this learners were given the option of creating video

recordings of themselves discussing various topics in English, uploading these onto the internal media server and sharing these with their lecturers. Using this method even the most nervous of learners could practice and record speaking English in a comfortable, pressure-free environment. Learners were able to watch their own videos and critically analyse their own recordings even before the teacher had seen them, they were able to reflect on their mistakes and often found lots of ways to improve the content, vocabulary and complexity of the English in their original video. The video recording tasks have proved to be a powerful reflective tool and self-improvement method which has allowed learners to have a greater independence in learning.

#### » Case study 3: Quick and effective feedback

A teacher from the health and social care department wanted to provide summative feedback to her students using alternative feedback methods instead of, and sometimes alongside, traditional written feedback. To address her requirements the eLearning team recommended the use of audio feedback. Training on the use of the iZone facilities and the internal media server was provided and the teacher was successfully able to create and upload audio recordings that she would then share with the students via the VLE. The iZone provided the teacher with a quiet area in which create the recordings, she was able to book out the rooms including the video booth and request ahead of time the devices and the support she required. There were many benefits of audio feedback, the teacher found it to be an effective time-saving tool and it is estimated that marking assignments in the traditional way would have taken about 25-50 % longer. This method of feedback delivery also appealed to students, by listening to the feedback as well as the tone of the teacher's voice, they had a better understanding of what they need to do to improve on their work.

#### » Case study 4: Learner-led innovation

A business studies learner worked within the iZone with the e-learning team for one week of her work experience. She was introduced to many free and openly available resources as means of creating online interactive resources. She demonstrated great passion, enthusiasm and technical ability, and produced a large quantity of extremely high quality and innovative online resources throughout the course of her work experience. On the last day of her placement, a showcase was arranged in the iZone so she could show her resources to the e-learning team and business course tutor. These included engaging guidance videos on social issues such as bullying and equality and diversity, online interactive content tailored directly to a specific BTEC business team-working unit as well as appealing, well-thought out and relevant interactive activities, online quizzes and assessments. The director of business and accountancy attended the showcase and was extremely impressed by the learner's work, so much so, that he requested that she disseminates her learning to the business team and asked if she could continue to produce online learning resources for the department.

## Find out more:

Further information on the iZone is available on the [Redbridge College website](#) and the [iZone blog](#).

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