
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

Using iPads to deliver a personalised IT and learning strategy

iPad minis: part of the student toolkit

From autumn 2015 every 16-18 year old student at **Portsmouth College** will have access to an iPad mini device to support independent and personalised learning. The devices are regarded as part of the student toolkit and are college owned but student controlled. Students can take the devices home with them and use them anywhere and at any time. Students may either purchase or return their iPads when they leave the college.

This follows the successful 2014 Apple iPad project at the college which was designed to build student engagement throughout the institution. All teaching and frontline support staff were equipped with an iPad mini at the start of the summer and trained in their use prior to the start of the 2014 academic year when new students were also equipped with the same devices. The introduction of iPad minis was part of an initiative to drive the college learning, teaching and assessment strategy forwards through the use of mobile technology.

"This is partly to reflect the way people learn and also partly about trying to make lessons as engaging, interesting and as fun as we possibly can. We are noticing more engagement in lessons and that students are becoming more independent in their learning both inside and outside of class."

Simon Barrable, deputy principal, Portsmouth College

Staff have found that the iPads are useful for introducing practical and interactive ideas across all subject areas. Feedback indicates that in addition to making lessons more exciting, interactive, engaging and relevant, use of the iPads is also encouraging self-study and independent learning outside the college.

*"In creative arts we have used the iPads to improve learner independence when they are developing their ideas. We are working with apps like **Pinterest**, digital painting and storyboarding apps. We have been able to start doing some digital painting, and look at different painting techniques which brings the teaching techniques up to date with what modern artists are doing."*

Anna Hawes, creative arts teacher and Apple champion at Portsmouth College

*"In my lessons I am using apps like **GoogleDrive** and **GoogleDocs** to save my work online. When I get home I can just go back on to my iPad, log on and carry on from where I left off at college."*

Muaaz, student at Portsmouth College

A robust wireless network across the campus and integrated and interactive systems throughout the college provided through Apple TV is also improving teacher-student communications and facilitating online assessment and responsive feedback.

Student Apple ambassadors

The college also appointed approximately 70 student Apple ambassadors across the college covering all curriculum areas. The role of the ambassadors is to advise and help other students and staff to use the technology and the different apps that can be used to support different subjects.

The ambassadors went through a selection process and receive training each term from apple trainers on the use of the devices. The ambassadors help out during lessons, at events, open evenings etc. Although they are paid to attend events this is not their prime reason for participating and they are clear about the benefits of making use of every-day technology that is in everyone's hands and what it adds to their learning experiences:

*"One of my favourite apps to use in the lesson is **Nearpod**. It allows the teacher to present their presentation on our iPads in front of us. So instead of looking at the board and maybe missing something we can have it in front of us and we can go at our own pace as well as keep up with the teacher."*

Rachel, student at Portsmouth College

"We don't do it for the money – my main reason for taking on the role is my passion for using the iPad and integrating use in learning. The iPads have made studying more interesting as well as making it easier to make notes within the lessons."

George, student at Portsmouth College

"The use of iPads has made the teaching more inclusive and caters for all students, so dyslexic students can change the background of their work so they can read it properly."

Kayleigh, student at Portsmouth College

The introduction of ubiquitous access to mobile technologies combined with the personalised IT and learning strategy is part of a two-to-three year journey that is enabling everyone to engage with the evolving e-learning programme as part of daily life at the college.

How does this meet the challenge?

- » The purchase and implementation of iPads for students, teaching and front-line staff offers parity of digital resources across the college

- » This is combined with a robust and integrated network infrastructure and interactive communication systems
- » Students feel they are being equipped with what they need to succeed in terms of devices, access to technology and infrastructure
- » The potential for a digital divide between those who have personal access to mobile devices and those who do not has been addressed by issuing iPad minis to students and staff and regarding these as toolkits for learning
- » IT strategy focuses on use of personal devices and use; on developing people with technology (supporting high-value use) rather than just developing technical systems
- » The ability to customise settings and use technology to increase accessibility offers a more inclusive learning experience
- » The iPad minis offer seamless access to a large range of interactive content, both provided by the college and that which is freely available (educational apps, ebooks, video and audio, YouTube etc.)
- » Through formal training and informal use, students and staff are developing digital literacy skills that will enhance their employability and professional skills
- » The integrated and interactive nature of the Apple iPad project is increasing student enjoyment of, and engagement in, learning

Find out more:

Portsmouth College **announce** the continuation of their personalised IT and learning strategy using iPad technology for 2015-2016

Supporting teachers at Portsmouth College

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