LEARNING AND TEACHING ENHANCEMENT

LEARNING & TEACHING STRATEGY

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APPROVAL / AGREEMENT

Committee	Date	Comments	Approved
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CONTENTS

CCCU APPROACH TO DIGITAL CAPABILITIES

AIM

The aim of this document is to describe how CCCU supports students and staff in enhancing their digital capabilities. It presents a rationale for developing these capabilities, defines who is responsible for this enhancement and provides a framework within which to structure the development of digital capabilities.

WHY DO WE NEED A FOCUS ON DIGITAL CAPABILITIES?

During the last three decades digital technology has fundamentally changed learning and teaching within the education sector. Policy makers have recognised that digital literacy "is an essential tool that underpins other subjects and almost all jobs" and therefore "Universities should ensure that all graduates are digitally competent". (House of Lords Digital Skills Committtee, 2014, p. 12). In a recent report entitled "Disinformation and 'fake news'" by the House of Commons Digital Culture, Media and Sport Committee, digital literacy was described as a new literacy, "the fourth pillar of education, alongside reading, writing and maths" (2018, p. 63)

The development of digital capabilities should be intrinsic to academic programmes (Littlejohn, Beetham and Mcgill, 2012; Davies, Mullan and Feldman, 2017), enabling students to utilise digital technologies and information sources as they progress through their programme of study, ultimately developing the digital capabilities that will enable them to live, learn and work successfully in a digital society

There are several reasons why it is essential for Universities to develop the digital capabilities of every student and staff member.

EMPLOYABILITY

The UK, like many countries, has shifted in recent decades from an industrial economy to an information-based economy. Without an acceptable level of digital capabilities in the working population of these countries, employees will have difficulties keeping abreast of new developments and fulfilling the needs of a highly digitised economy. Therefore, developing digital capabilities must be an essential goal for universities in order to ensure their graduates' employability (Chatterton and Rebbeck, 2015).

INCLUSION

In a recent study by UCISA (2017),reducing barriers and increasing independence for students with disabilities was identified as a main driver for developing students' digital capabilities. Digital technologies offer all students a flexible interface to their learning, allowing them to reduce and remove barriers to their education that may be a result of their physical, mental or socio-economic situation.

It is equally as important to develop staff digital capabilities to allow them to develop and deliver an inclusive curriculum as it is to develop the digital capabilities of our students to allow them to engage effectively with that curriculum and the overall student experience.

LIFELONG AND INDEPENDENT LEARNING

The results of the 2017/18 "Student digital experience tracker" at CCCU show that more than 60% of students think that the use of technology helps them to become more independent learners. The rapid changes of a digital society require students and staff to become lifelong learners, with digital skills applicable to all areas of life, not just of work. Therefore, digital capabilities, such as finding and critically evaluating digital information or learning in a digital context, have become essential to maintaining up-to-date knowledge and applying it in practice.

UNIVERSITY STRATEGY

The University Learning & Teaching Strategy 2015 states that a key aspect of supporting success for all students is to *"[encourage them] to use technology and a wide range of digital media to maximise and support learning."* Creating digitally literate students is one of the key graduate attributes that underpins this strategy (Canterbury Christ Church University, 2015). In addition, our Technology Enhanced Learning Strategy 2017 provides a focus on digital literacy, stating that. *"Our students will be supported to become adaptive and effective users of technology. Our graduates will be able to respond quickly and confidently to rapidly changing technologies in their field, and embrace emerging opportunities in an increasingly digital world."* (Canterbury Christ Church University, 2016b).

Cultivating research literacy among students in order to develop "the knowledge base that supports success in the industries, sectors and communities in which they wish to develop and advance careers " (Canterbury Christ Church University, 2018) is an essential aim of CCCU's Strategic Plan for Research & Enterprise 2018 to 2023 (2018). Research literacy includes a range of digital capabilities such as collaborating in virtual space or accessing digital information and is therefore supported by this document.

DEFINITION OF DIGITAL CAPABILITIES

CCCU has adopted the JISC model for digital capabilities, which defines these as "the capabilities which fit someone for living, learning and working in a digital society" (JISC, 2014)

The CCCU Learning & Teaching Strategy 2015 uses the term "digital literacy" in the same context as Jisc's framework uses the term "digital capabilities". To maintain consistency with both documents, the terms "Digital Literacy" and "Digital Capabilities" are used interchangeably, but "digital capabilities" will be the term adopted in all future documents.

DIGITAL CAPABILITIES FRAMEWORK

Jisc's "6 elements of digital capabilities" (JISC, 2016) provides the framework upon which our approach to Digital Capabilities is based. This framework provides six main elements through which it defines digital capabilities:

1. ICT proficiency
2. Information, data and media literacy
3. Digital creation, problem solving and innovation
4. Digital communication, collaboration and participation
5. Digital learning and development
6. Digital Identity and well-being

OBJECTIVES

There are two main objectives for our approach.

1) To develop every student into a Digitally Capable Graduate.

2) To provide continuous development of the digital capabilities of CCCU staff.

DEFINITION OF A DIGITALLY CAPABLE GRADUATE

Being "digitally literate" is one of CCCU's "Graduate Attributes" (Canterbury Christ Church University, 2016a) . The first objective of our approach is to develop this attribute. It aims to do this by providing our students with the correct skillset to be digitally capable individuals when they graduate. We define a digitally capable graduate as one that has achieved particular ability in each of the six elements of the framework, as follows:

ICT Proficiency

A digitally capable graduate will be confident in the adoption of new technologies, and have the capacity to choose, learn and utilise an appropriate technology relevant to a given task.

Information, Data and Media Literacies

A digitally capable graduate will have the capacity to find, critically evaluate, manage and share digital information in different settings. They will be confident in their ethical application of this information.

Digital Creation, Problem Solving and Innovation

A digital capable graduate will be confident in their application of technology to solve problems. They will understand the digital production process and be able to create a variety of digital artefacts.

Digital Communication, Collaboration and Participation

A digitally capable graduate will be confident in their ability to effectively communicate through digital media. They will have the capacity to participate in digital teams, and the confidence to build and engage with digital networks.

Digital Learning and Development

A digitally capable graduate will have the capacity to participate in, and benefit from, digital learning opportunities. They will also have the capacity to support and develop others in digital environments.

Digital Identity and Wellbeing

A digitally capable graduate will have the capacity to project a positive digital identity and to manage digital reputation. They will also have the capacity to maintain a healthy and safe life in a digital society.

It is understood that while this provides a broad definition of a digitally capable graduate, individual academic programmes may, through necessity, place more emphasis on career-focused capabilities and as such not all digitally capable graduates will be equal in all areas.

GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES

As well as developing the *Digitally Literate* graduate attribute, the digital capabilities framework can also support the development of our other graduate attributes. The list below highlights some of the most relevant digital capabilities for each of these.

Graduate Attribute	Related Digital Capability
Adaptable	ICT Proficiency; Digital Learning and Development
Effective Communicator	Digital Communication, Collaboration and Participation
Informed	Information, Data and Media Literacies
Innovative	Digital Creation, Problem Solving and Innovation
Professional	ICT Proficiency; Digital Learning and Development; Digital Identity and Wellbeing
Self-Aware	Digital Identity and Wellbeing

By developing a digitally capable individual, we are therefore also contributing towards the more complete graduate that our graduate attributes are designed to create.

DEVELOPMENT OF DIGITAL CAPABILITIES OF STAFF

The development of digital capabilities amongst CCCU staff will provide increased opportunities for the creation of inclusive and digitally enabled pedagogies, as well as benefitting our staff in many other ways within their professional and personal lives. The second objective of our approach is to provide opportunity for our staff to achieve the same digital capabilities as expressed within our definition of a Digitally Capable Graduate.

ENABLERS

1. Provide opportunity for staff and students to self-assess and reflect upon their digital capabilities and identify areas where further development may be necessary or desired.
   This will be done by :
   - Identifying and evaluating tools and/or services to allow users to self-assess their digital capabilities.
   - Identifying and developing guidance on opportunities for developing each of the digital capabilities within the framework.
   - Providing opportunity and encourage participation for individuals to engage with self-assessment.

2. Provide members of staff with face-to-face and online learning opportunities in order to improve their digital capabilities
   This will be done by :
   - Developing and offering a variety of generic and subject specific face-to-face and online learning opportunities for members of staff

3. Provide clear opportunities to embed the development of digital capabilities within the curriculum, and for all programmes to engage with these opportunities as part of their curriculum design.
   This will be done by :
   - Developing models showing how to embed digital capabilities within curriculum design, and share those models with academic colleagues.
   - Developing good practice case studies, showcasing existing practices.
   - Ensuring that digital capabilities are considered and recognised during validation through inclusion within standard validation processes.

4. For the University to understand the current digital capabilities of staff and students in order to shape developmental opportunities.
   This will be done by :
   - Monitoring trends in digital capability self-assessment to determine where resource may be required.
   - Providing development opportunities such as online activities, workshops, tutorials.
   - Developing approaches to identify confidence and competence levels with students prior to (or at point of) course commencement.

5. Promote and enable digital collaboration amongst staff and students.
   This will be done by :
   - Engaging with Collaboration Skills workshops to develop understanding of relevant skills.
   - Developing good practice case studies, showcasing existing practices.
   - Encouraging collaboration advocates amongst staff and students to support and promote collaborative opportunities with peers.
   - Supporting researchers and research students to develop and to work collaboratively in virtual space.

6. Promote and enable peer mentoring in digital capabilities between staff and students and establish opportunities for reward and recognition.
   This will be done by :
   - Incorporating promotion and support of digital capabilities within the official capacity of the University's Peer Mentoring schemes.
   - Developing regular opportunities for staff to achieve recognition of good practice in digital capability development.

STAKEHOLDERS

Our approach to digital capabilities is led by the Digital Capabilities Working Group which reports directly to both the Technology Enhanced Learning Advisory Group and the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Working Group, and through the latter to Education and Student Experience Committee.

The approach recognises that within the University all students and staff are stakeholders in enhancing digital capabilities.

To represent this, the Digital Capabilities Working Group includes representatives from:
- Each of the academic faculties
- Student Union (representatives TBA)
- LTE
- Library and Learning Resources
- Academic Skills Development
- IT
- Student Experience
- Student Health & Wellbeing
- Human Resources & Organisational Development
- Department of Enterprise, Employability and Research Development

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