Leeds Digital Festival

Leeds can proudly claim to host the North’s largest digital festival. Launched three years ago, the festival has grown year on year through the collaboration of private and public sector institutions across the city. This year the festival doubled in size to accommodate more than 170 events over two weeks at 60 locations with 500 speakers, attracting around 20,000 people from the city and beyond. Events included workshops, demonstrations, presentations and panel discussions highlighting digital expertise in areas such as gaming, women in tech, cyber security and data.

The University of Leeds was a premier sponsor of this popular festival and supported events around the city. We also provided opportunities for people to visit campus to find out more about our contributions to the digital landscape through research, teaching and our strategic partnerships. Throughout the two weeks in April, we hosted 18 events culminating with a showcase afternoon in Parkinson Court. These events illustrated the breadth of digital innovation on offer from the University, supported by both faculties and services. All events were well received and were attended by a diverse audience, with some workshops being oversubscribed.

We are now gearing up for the Leeds Digital Festival 2019 and had an initial meeting with the festival director, Stuart Clarke, in late September. Last year we put out a call for interest and planned the co-ordination of events as a working group. The timeline was tight and some colleagues who wanted to contribute were not able to. For the 2019 festival we intend to get started much earlier and we have greater ambitions – we intend to focus events on a full day’s showcase on campus with co-ordinated supplementary events around the University.

Leeds is gaining a reputation as a hub for digital innovation, and as a University we can provide a focus for this. As well as showcasing what we do, we are also keen to highlight our spaces, both for our own events and as a venue for other participating organisations. We are also keen to address diversity within digital, particularly highlighting the role that women play, both at the University and in the wider city.

If you would like to showcase your innovation in the digital sector, or help with the organisation of the University’s contribution to the festival, please get in touch by emailing digitaleducation@leeds.ac.uk. The Digital Education Service will host an initial meeting to gather ideas and set up a University-wide working group. By working together we can ensure that we co-ordinate events across the festival and define a communications plan to promote our contributions.
Student perspectives

Rebecca Dearden, Student Cases (Secretariat)

This issue of the Bulletin focuses on all things digital. The importance of supporting digital literacy in our students and online socialisation cannot be overestimated. It is important to set clear standards for online communication and explain that communication in online spaces is subject to the same University expectations in terms of Partnership and Dignity and Mutual Respect.

The University can, and does, take action against students under the General University Disciplinary Regulations where behaviour falls short of expectations. In some cases, where students are studying on professionally accredited programmes, online behaviour can also have Fitness to Practise consequences. At its most extreme, students can be asked to leave if their behaviour online means that they should no longer remain a member of the University community. Behaviour which is seen as bullying, harassment or discrimination, or otherwise constitutes criminal activity, can also lead to criminal prosecution.

The University has a zero-tolerance approach to online harassment and hate crime. Working in partnership, Leeds University Union and the University have developed a form to report such behaviour. The form is available at www.leeds.ac.uk/incidentreporting and can be used to report any incident of sexual violence, harassment or hate crime to the University. Support and guidance is also available for staff and students.

In line with a UUK 2016 Report ‘Changing the Culture’, we have also developed a new University Procedure for Report, Review and Response to incidents (the Procedure), which can be found at www.leeds.ac.uk/secretariat/reporting_hc_sa_oh.html

The Procedure applies to both postgraduate researchers and all taught students, and provides a clear and transparent process to enable the University to respond consistently to incidents reported to us. Students who report an incident are informed of the University’s response and are provided with a single point of contact for enquiries.

Outcomes of reports can involve:

- reporting the matter to the police; or
- information on disciplinary action that will be taken under the General University Disciplinary Regulations; or
- investigation of the complaint under the Student Complaints Procedure; or
- referral of the case to Human Resources for investigation; or
- identification of specialist support available; or
- an invitation to a student case conference to be called to involve the reporting student’s School to agree an action plan for ongoing study under the University Fitness to Study Procedure.

The University is also involved in a collaborative project with the University of York, to support staff to receive reports, including online reports from students. The purpose of this one-day interactive workshop is to ensure that colleagues working in a broad range of roles feel confident in how to receive and respond to student disclosures of sexual harassment and assault.

For more details of the First Responder Training, and to sign up, go to: peopledevelopment.leeds.ac.uk/news/first-responder-training-for-staff/

Further Information about the General University Disciplinary Regulations, Incident Reporting, the Report, Review and Response Procedure, and the work of the Student Cases Team is available at www.leeds.ac.uk/student_cases.html

Matt Port
LUU Welfare Officer

Over the summer I’ve been setting the groundwork for opening a dialogue with students on how their drug and alcohol use is affecting their mental health, and in turn, their studies. I’m really excited about getting a frank discussion involving staff and students to take place on campus, and engaging with the student body with their own wellbeing. With my year in office, I want to push for more understanding and support for students, and spur a willingness to investigate the underlying causes for poor mental health in our students. I think that building wellbeing into every decision that both the Union and the University make is crucial to enabling our students to continue to achieve at such a high level. Alongside this, I have started expanding the availability of free sanitary products in LUU’s building and I am hoping to push this outside the walls of the Union and into the University as a whole. Supporting our students who menstruate throughout their education here is crucial in ensuring the barriers to learning are limited in every way possible.

Since settling into the role, I’ve been thinking about what success would look like for my manifesto points. I’ve been talking to different staff members about how we can ensure students can get ‘real’ module choices; so when they start a programme the modules they’re initially offered are in fact available and timetabling / caps don’t stop students enrolling where they’d really like to. I’ve also been working to better understand the unique issues joint-honours students face, and working with staff to find the best ways to mitigate them. With regard to better exam resources, I’ve been talking to academic colleagues and getting ideas on how we can better prepare students across the University. Alongside this, I’m carrying on my predecessor Zaki’s work around diversifying assessments. My experience as a student off-campus inspired my final manifesto point, to put students off-campus inspired my final manifesto point, to put

Serene Esuruoso
LUU Education Officer

...
Finessing the Leeds offer with digital
Tom Ward, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Student Education)

As usual I would like to start by thanking everyone for the effort, creativity, and care brought to our educational mission. The academic session 2017-18 brought momentous changes and exceptional difficulties for the sector, and at the start of the next session there are some big picture successes to point at.

The top-line metrics on DLHE and NSS have held up, and we remain a highly attractive destination for home undergraduates, with another buoyant recruitment cycle in the context of an accelerating demographic dip.

Looking forward to 2018-19, this is how our agenda and the wider environment looks from my desk.

First I would like to say something about the ‘complexity agenda’ which I have been raising since I arrived. To reiterate, this is not about a metric-driven prune of modules. It is about responding intelligently to the fact that we are bumping up against hard constraints in our ability to timetable, the need to create headroom for new ideas, and the enormous time taken up in managing and running a larger suite of programmes and modules than our competitors. The long-term objective is to have an actively managed portfolio of high quality programmes and modules, delivered in a way that is sustainable for the people and systems involved. Freeing up headroom – that is time of academic and professional staff, space in the din of marketing too many programmes, less pressure on timetabling and examinations – is not just a necessary response to make life manageable; it is a key part of enabling some very positive developments:

1. Being able to look at the offer as a whole, and to take advantage of expertise or new ideas beyond the programme. For example, Sports and Exercise Sciences students now gain a broader knowledge of human physiology, whilst Biomedical Sciences students now gain a better understanding of changes in human performance as a result of aging and the extremes of exercise and environment – this all in part because of efforts in FBS over some years to manage the portfolio more actively.

2. Also in FBS, third-year modules are built around ‘advanced topic units’ (ATUs) of five to six lectures, shared across multiple programmes and refreshed each year, with units being dropped and others introduced to reflect the latest developments and thinking. Decisions around what ATUs should constitute the final years of several programmes are made yearly following a staff meeting, maximising the contribution whilst minimising the organisational burden. Thinking like this begins to open up ways to maintain the vitality and relevance of the curriculum, bring in new research directions, reduce CMA risk, and control organisational complexity.

3. LUBS has a history of actively managing thresholds for module enrolments, and has built a modest portfolio of relatively large programmes. This has allowed them to (for example) have the capacity to explore degree apprenticeships and CPD as well as make a vital contribution to around 50 joint-honours programmes.

4. A small number of modules made available online show the potential to have an impact in multiple directions. Preparing students better for the work environment of the future; escaping timetable constraints; using online to educate in innovative ways. We have an exceptional Digital Education Service and leadership in the field, and the potential impact of more use of online in Discovery and high demand modules is immense.

5. Within an inherent complexity of a commitment to multiple languages at multiple levels, LCS has embarked on a journey to find simpler ways to offer the same range of options. Not a simple project, and much still to do, but this has contributed to a headline reduction in the number of programmes the whole institution offers.

And so on, but perhaps the challenge in a school as complex as LCS is a good point to move on to some of the ways we can all support this, because it is not an easy process.

Using a commitment of strategic funding in Student Education, we have launched an ‘Evidencing and Sustaining the Leeds Educational Offer’ workstream. Dr James Pickering is the academic lead for this, ably supported by Imogen Sammon. The aim of ‘Developing and implementing evidence-informing processes to deliver sustainable and enhanced student education’ is quite a mouthful, but within that they will be visiting schools and faculties, and equipping DSEs and Pro-Deans for Student Education with the tools and the evidence needed to support effective portfolio management, enhance the offer, and be able to evidence the impact in settings like TEF.

Digital and online is a central plank of how we need to respond to the pressures. Students should expect a mixed economy of face to face, online, and blended. That will be their workplace future, and we should help them prepare for it. In doing so we can also unblock hard constraints from timetabling and teaching space, become better ourselves at exploiting the potential of blended learning, and keep our offer competitive with the global competition.

Returning to the headline positive story emerging from NSS, I am sure everyone reading this shares my concern that across assessment and feedback and lecturing we have seen very significant falls, in some cases of enormous scale.

This will be addressed via the usual channels, but I’d like to take the opportunity to remind everyone that we have highly developed Codes of Practice on Assessment, which include our approach to Inclusive Assessment. During this session we will be reviewing the presentation of our learning and teaching policies to bring them into a single coherent narrative to make them easier to use. Do please make use of these thoughtful policy resources.
Where next for digital?

Neil Morris, Director of Digital Learning

The University continues to invest in digital technologies to support staff and students. In this article, I will give an overview of projects coming to fruition and plans in the pipeline that will assist staff in the delivery of flexible, inclusive and interactive learning and teaching.

There have been upgrades of a number of student education systems over the summer, including Minerva and the Lecture Capture Multimedia Management system. These have provided new tools and solutions to enable staff to create and publish high quality, interactive, multimedia learning resources, and to design engaging and active online learning activities.

We are also in the process of implementing two new digital education systems – Analytics for Learn and a mobile voting system. Both systems are on ‘limited release’ this session, with selected pilots running across the University. Analytics for Learn is a Blackboard-based system that provides data-rich reports on students’ engagement with Minerva-based activities. This should help us to identify students who may benefit from a conversation with tutors about progress. The mobile voting system will allow staff to create in-class quizzes and activities to increase active learning and enable reporting of progress within Minerva. We are excited by the progress of both pilots and look forward to rolling them out.

We are keenly aware that technological advances are rapid and can feel overwhelming in our already busy lives. As such, all new systems and tools will be accompanied by professional development support from CDKPL, and we are also working on new frameworks for blended learning and digital literacy to help staff to orient themselves with the use of digital technology in support of student education. We hope staff will be able to start using these new frameworks during this session.

The Digital Education Service has also been supporting staff in the creation of online discovery modules (see p.9). These enable students to study on FutureLearn alongside external learners, bearing modules to support the recruitment of international students, and systems and tools will be accompanied by professional development support from CDKPL, and we are also working on new frameworks for blended learning and digital literacy to help staff to orient themselves with the use of digital technology in support of student education. We hope staff will be able to start using these new frameworks during this session.

The Digital Education Service has also been supporting staff in the creation of online discovery modules (see p.9). These enable students to study on FutureLearn alongside external learners, bearing modules to support the recruitment of international students. Online courses on external platforms serve as a fantastic exemplar of our excellence in student education and can reach huge audiences of potential students globally. Staff are strongly encouraged to consider opportunities to create short, faster courses online, or full credit-bearing modules to support the recruitment of international students to undergraduate or postgraduate programmes.

Finally, the Digital Education Service is also supporting Leeds University Business School in the creation of a Masters-level degree apprenticeship in business leadership, which will launch in early 2019. The programme makes extensive use of online learning to maximise flexibility, inclusivity and student engagement for a cohort made up of working professionals across the UK.

In summary, there are huge opportunities for digital technology and online education. Not only will this support and enhance the learning opportunities for our campus-based students, but also to reach new global audiences and support international student recruitment.

What staff and students think of lecture capture

Bronwen Swinnerton, Research Fellow in Digital Learning

We have been conducting research over the last four years of the use of lecture capture by students and staff at the University, using a mixed-method approach including multiple data sources (staff and student surveys, plus system data), to explore the perceptions of staff and students using the institutional lecture capture and desktop capture system.

There have been a number of previous studies describing the benefits of audio and video capture of lectures for student learning. Perceived benefits include flexible learning (anytime, anywhere access to learning materials), multi-modal learning (providing learning resources in multiple formats), deeper learning (ability to evaluate and contextualise learning resources over time), accessibility and practicality. Studies have found that students tend to be very positive about lecture capture. In general, students believe that lecture capture improves their academic performance, enabling them to catch up on content they may have missed in class, or to make up for absences. Students feel that the ability to pause, rewind and fast forward as they please provides them with control over their learning and supports independent study.

Several studies have also suggested that students have increased satisfaction when lecture capture is available and often state they would like more, enjoying the flexibility it provides. However, academic staff are not so positive about lecture capture. Research shows that academics become more self-conscious and change their behaviour as a result, for example, talking to the microphone instead of students and repeating materials for the camera. In these scenarios, staff are concerned about recordings reducing interactivity between teachers and students, and students and students. Staff are also concerned about the impact of lecture capture on them as teachers and professionals, citing concerns about the notion of intrusion, impact on spontaneity, students using recordings to parody their lectures on social networking sites, concerns about body image and need for media training. Academic staff also have concerns about the impact of lecture capture on student performance and attainment, although research findings on the impact of lecture capture on students’ learning are mixed: some studies show no impact on learning outcomes, whilst others show an increase in academic performance.

Research is also contested about the value of the ‘lecture’ versus ‘active learning’ teaching sessions. Supporters of the...
lecture describe the value of didactic delivery to initiate a ‘dialogic relationship’ between lecturer and students, and criticise the view of transmissive knowledge exchange during a ‘traditional lecture’ as an inaccurate representation of the interaction between teacher and students during such sessions and the learning processes triggered by the lecture. Proponents of active learning cite the strength of the constructivist approach to learning, and research demonstrating the value of active learning to improve learning outcomes, whilst supporters of lectures cite research demonstrating high ‘recall and retention’ from lecturing.

Over the four-year period of our study (2014-15 to 2017-18 inclusive), there were 4.47 million views of content within the Mediasite system at Leeds. Of these, 82% (3,675,871 views) were from logged-in students, with the remainder from staff (2.7%, 121,277 views), and anonymous users viewing externally visible content (15.1%, 674,860 views). Overall, students watched 1,662,438 presentations for a total of 893,977 hours.

Data from this study demonstrated that there is strong student demand for, and usage of recorded lectures, over a sustained period. Students have significant engagement with content, both for examination revision and during term time. Students cite a range of reasons for using lecture capture, including note-taking, understanding, revision, as well as for catching up on missed teaching. Students reported very strong demand for increased use of recording for a wide range of teaching sessions, and in some cases for changes in teaching approach.

What students said about lecture capture

“Ensure that all lectures are lecture captured – the University has the facilities and I truly believe it helps you to learn better. How can anyone note-take effectively for a solid hour?”

“None of my lectures are available online – I would really like it if they were since it can help a lot to be able to listen to what lecturers say multiple times.”

“Flip the classroom – if most lectures are recorded and change little from year to year, why can’t students watch the lecture beforehand and use the time in class to broaden their understanding with the lecturer?”

Quantitative data from this study show that around a quarter of staff believed that lecture capture had resulted in a change in their teaching style, which was supported by qualitative data that suggests staff had become more transmissive, less spontaneous, less likely to engage students and more cautious about what they say. Some staff also perceived that lecture capture reduces students’ concentration and interaction in class, and that attendance is reduced. Qualitative data from this study further show that staff have ongoing concerns about the impact of lecture capture on students’ learning, believing that students are failing to read beyond the lecture, engaging in superficial learning, and demonstrating reduced note-taking skills.

In general, staff believe that lecture recording reduces students’ learning, for the majority of students, conceding only that it may be beneficial for disabled students and students for whom English is not their first language. Whilst students of all demographic categories claimed to use lecture recordings to support their learning, some staff believe that only international students use, and derive value from recordings.

What staff said about lecture capture

“Lecture capture reinforces some of the worst pedagogical aspects of the modern lecture, increasing focus on delivery of material and transmission of material from PowerPoint slides, rather than provoking students to think. It’s education as consumption, which is sad.”

“Students are reluctant to speak up in lectures for fear of looking a fool on film.”

“I think there is a risk of students not taking sufficient notes or paying sufficient attention in class thinking they can review the subject later by using the lecture capture online.”

The debate about lecturing versus active learning, and the use of recording systems to capture teaching content, is clearly complex and contested, and it is fundamental to the process of teaching and learning in the majority of universities. However, the arguments on both sides tend to be over-simplified, suggesting that one solution is better than another in all situations. This ignores the complexity of learning and teaching in relation to the needs of the learners, the desired learning outcomes, the pedagogical approach, the physical and virtual spaces available, the technological tools available and the digital literacy of the staff and students. Each of these variables varies by discipline and level, and will often vary within a single course or degree programme. Such variability means there is rarely, if ever, a single ‘one size fits all’ approach to learning and teaching, and increases the importance of staff understanding the curriculum design and pedagogical approaches which will help their diverse cohort of learners to meet their learning needs; in our digital age, this requires staff to have a strong understanding of educational technology, including all of its affordances and drawbacks.

With such high student demand for use of lecture capture, it becomes more and more important for teaching staff to explain their pedagogic rationale to their students, and to explain the importance of note-taking, understanding and extra reading as key aspects of the learning experience. For staff, there needs to be an awareness that educational technologies are not going away, and that inclusive curricula and updated pedagogical approaches may be needed, which include use of tools such as lecture capture where pedagogically appropriate to cater for their students’ needs. In many cases, learning and teaching will take place through class time involving a mixture of didactic delivery (lecturing) and active learning (participation, interaction, collaboration), and education technologies such as lecture capture will be valuable to record the didactic parts (for later use by students), whereas other technologies such as voting tools, collaborative writing tools, web resources, etc, will be valuable for the active learning parts. In this scenario, curriculum design, digital literacy, space configuration and technology can work together to help learners achieve their learning outcomes.

This article is an abridged extract from a journal article currently under review for publication.
Transforming Transition: enhancing our students’ experience
Kate Nicholson (Digital Education Service), Jenna Isherwood and Katy Manns (both International Student Office)

Starting at a new university can be a significant change. Feeling at Home in Leeds, a set of new online guides developed in partnership by the International Student Office and the Digital Education Service, helps students navigate the transition to living and studying in a new social, cultural and academic environment.

The guides explore the holistic experience of starting an academic programme in a new place and making significant life changes, highlighting what can be exciting, challenging and rewarding, and suggesting ideas and strategies to help students settle in. The voices and experiences of students and postgraduate researchers are at the centre of these guides, to normalise the range of responses to culture and lifestyle change. The guides also directly encourage users to engage in personal reflection to support their transition.

The guides were funded by a gift to the University to enhance the international student experience, and versions have been developed for undergraduates, taught postgraduates and postgraduate researchers.

Project aims
The project aims to fill a gap in initial and ongoing transition support, particularly in the area of dealing with change, and to mitigate the risk of information overload on arrival. The University already offers a wide range of support to international students – centrally, through schools, and through websites. The International Student Office also currently provides support for helping students deal with culture change through highly successful face-to-face workshops. However, these cannot be delivered on a large scale, and may not always be available when individual students need them most. The team believed that flexible, online guides could support and enhance these existing resources.

Developing the guides
The highly collaborative development process combined the expertise of the Digital Education Service with an understanding of students’ needs and experiences drawn from staff and students across the University co-ordinated by the International Student Office, as well as extensive stakeholder engagement and reference to previous research and feedback.

The taught student guides were written by Lydia Bleasdale and Sarah Humphreys from the School of Law (informed by their LITE project on student resilience), Jiani Liu from Skills@Library and Jenna Isherwood from the International Student Office. Key activities take inspiration from successful exercises in face-to-face workshops run by the International Student Office and Student Counselling and Wellbeing.

The guides also draw on insights into student transitions from Bee Bond’s LITE project; LUU’s Express Yourself research; the Leeds for Life induction and transition project; the taught postgraduate induction enhancement project; and the Inclusive Learning and Teaching Guides. They also benefit from contributions and review from staff in Student Counselling and Wellbeing, Leeds University Union, Student Placement, and other areas of the University.

A series of workshops were held with students and postgraduate researchers, which informed the content and approach needed for each level. In addition, the guides themselves feature the voices and stories of nearly 40 students (see images above) and postgraduate researchers, showcasing a wide range of perspectives.

The guides are designed to be accessible, engaging and interactive, with a balanced tone that recognises challenges whilst emphasising support and opportunities. Beginning by exploring students’ experience of culture change, the guides then highlight skills and strategies for managing change more generally. The next sections look in more detail at the benefits of finding a balanced routine, managing wellbeing, making friends, finding and choosing opportunities, and navigating academic transitions. A key section explores the support available at the University, and this is also emphasised throughout.

Rather than building typical pages resembling the University’s academic spaces, the Digital Education Service designed self-contained units with a rigorous pedagogical approach and cohesive visual design. The guides feature a range of resources, including: videos of student interviews, detailed and instructive text guidance, and self-reflection tasks.

Inclusive support and educational development is a key focus for the University. The flexibility of online delivery allows the guides to...
Digital CPD
Carol Elston, Head of Digital Education Service

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is a requirement for the majority of professions. It safeguards the public and the employer as well as the professional undertaking the training or development. As such, many organisations will only sponsor CPD if it can be demonstrated that the provider is an accredited professional body or an academic institution.

With the imminent introduction of the Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF), which creates similar accountability as REF for research and TEF for student education, the University will be required to formally define our capability for knowledge exchange, including the provision of CPD. This will provide a benchmarking opportunity and a mechanism for comparison of HEIs. The University has recognised the need to understand our current CPD provision and develop further opportunities in readiness for KEF.

Providing CPD clearly provides an opportunity for revenue generation, but also helps with relationship building. A strategic industry partnership is highly valued yet time consuming and costly to develop and maintain. This is certainly evident when considering international alliances for research or student recruitment. The provision of CPD, whether on campus or online, can help to forge relationships and open doors for broader collaborations.

The University already provides a range of CPD courses, some for academic credit, others for industry-recognised accreditation. This CPD is available for staff development and in many cases also to a wider audience, as research dissemination, public engagement, or as a showcase of the excellence in teaching provided by Leeds. Historically, the majority of CPD has been delivered face to face, but we are now providing CPD to a wider international audience through partnerships with external online platform providers.

The Digital Education Service (DES) currently provides a range of online CPD for professionals wherever they are in their careers. Learners benefit from updating their knowledge with cutting-edge research or gaining valuable insight to new trends, legislation or approaches to their profession. These courses are available to an international audience through the University's partnerships with FutureLearn (8 million learners) and Coursera (over 30 million learners). The DES can also support colleagues with the development of more niche courses on Blackboard Open Education.

To engage, CPD needs to be professionally designed and developed, it needs to include relevant and up-to-date information and provide the opportunity to collaborate with industry leading academics and peers. In many CPD courses, networking with peers provides a valuable element of the experience. The DES has a proven track record in designing first-class online learning and can help colleagues develop their own ideas for CPD into innovative courses.

It is important to recognise that the ability to reach the millions of professionals seeking relevant, informed and quality CPD opportunities is already within our current capability as a University. If you have an existing face-to-face CPD course that you feel could be extended to a wider online audience, or you have an idea for a new CPD course, please complete the expression of interest form at digitaleducation.leeds.ac.uk/course-enquiry-form and a member of the DES team will get in touch to discuss the available options.

What students said about the guides

“Central to the resource is the student voice, as students are more likely to listen to our peers about the experience of transition. Consulting with students helped us create and deliver the most important and relevant pieces of information to the students required.

I believe that students will benefit from accessing this resource as it encourages a holistic approach to life in Leeds, promoting the idea that ‘University is not only about studying all the time’ and reassure them that everyone experiences this transition in different ways.”

Iulian Biris
POLIS

Explore the guides
You can explore the guides yourself to learn more about the transition experiences of students and postgraduate researchers, and the range of support available to them. You can refer students or postgraduate researchers to it directly, and also use it in one-to-one support sessions or staff training. The guides are available at http://students.leeds.ac.uk/feelingathome

Contact us
If you’d like to find out more about the guides, contact the International Student Office at globalcommunity@leeds.ac.uk
Online language learning
Carolin Schneider, Language Centre

With around 34,000 students from 150 countries and staff from 98 nations, many of you will have some contact with people who speak different languages. You may have been abroad for your holidays, a conference or research collaborations.

Speaking another language can help you build better professional relationships and feel more comfortable when travelling abroad or exploring source materials in other languages, and it can make overseas visitors to the University feel welcome. If you want to learn a new language or brush up your skills in a language that you have learned in the past, now is the time.

Getting started
Everyone learns differently and learning a language is just the same as learning anything else. Try different methods and use the one(s) that works for you. Here are some ideas from the Language Zone team – learn at your desk or on your mobile!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What you could do</th>
<th>Practical examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Find time to learn. Make it a habit.</td>
<td>Start with 10-15 minutes per day. Set a reminder on your phone or allocate a specific time of day, e.g. after lunch or during your commute.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Try different ways of learning. Find a language partner.</td>
<td>Follow a text book or a programme such as Rosetta Stone. Interact with speakers of the language you are learning, e.g. through the Language Exchange <a href="http://leedsforlife.leeds.ac.uk/languageexchange">http://leedsforlife.leeds.ac.uk/languageexchange</a>, or online.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Find ways of integrating the foreign language into your daily life.</td>
<td>Write your shopping list in the language you are learning. Cook recipes that relate to your target language. Follow social media accounts that post in the target language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remind yourself why you are learning a new language.</td>
<td>Remember your goals and the reasons why you are learning a language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visualise your success.</td>
<td>Imagine yourself in a few years’ time, when you have reached your language goals. Reward yourself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seek help if you need guidance or motivation.</td>
<td>Approach your language teacher, personal tutor or the Language Zone team.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The University offers you free access to the interactive Rosetta Stone software to get you started on your language learning journey. Rosetta Stone allows you to learn online and on-the-go via mobile devices, giving you the opportunity to learn a wide range of languages from beginner to intermediate level.

Access courses online at your own convenience using a PC, tablet, or mobile device. The mobile app will synchronise your account across all your devices, so that your progress record is up to date whichever device you log in from.

Its flexibility means that it’s easy to fit learning around other commitments, and you can use the materials to supplement taught language modules or to study independently to develop transferable skills in communication, problem-solving and cultural sensitivity.

- Stand out in the job market with multilingual skills
- Build your confidence to travel, study or work abroad

You can choose to perfect your English (UK and US), learn French, German, or any of the following languages:

Arabic, Dari, Dutch, Greek, Hebrew, Hindi, Indonesian, Italian, Irish, Japanese, Korean, Latin, Mandarin Chinese, Pashto, Persian (Farsi), Polish, Spanish (European and Latin American), Brazilian Portuguese, Russian.

Accessing Rosetta Stone
To access the Rosetta Stone software, log in to Minerva and search for Rosetta Stone in the Discover tab. If you don’t already have a University username and password, you can apply for one online or go to the IT Service Desk on Level 10 of the EC Stoner Building. Further details on how to access Rosetta Stone can be found at www.leeds.ac.uk/vle/generalhelp/rosetta/

Support your learning in the Language Zone
Further support is available in the Language Zone (Parkinson Building, Level 2). Part of the Language Centre, the Language Zone is a self-study resource centre where you can access free resources and advice to help you learn a language. It is open to all students and staff at the University and provides free learning material in more than 50 languages, such as books, magazines, audio and video resources. The centre has a computer cluster for personal study, and offers a range of workshops, language groups and advice drop-ins to help you study. You could also communicate with a native speaker of the language you’re learning as part of our language exchange, run through Leeds for Life. You can create a profile at leedsforlife.leeds.ac.uk

Come along
The Language Zone also offers drop-in sessions for your use of Rosetta Stone for language learning on Tuesdays from 12-1pm, and on Thursdays from 1-2pm. If you can’t make those times, you can still come to the Language Zone during opening hours and someone will be available to help you. You can also call us on 0113 34 2646 or email languagezone@leeds.ac.uk

Be social!
Keep in touch with Language Centre on social media:
twitter.com/LeedsLangCentre
www.facebook.com/LeedsLangCentre
Digital discovery modules
Megan Kime, Head of Digital Student Education

In 2015 the Digital Education Service was provided with University Strategic Investment funding to create a number of digital (or blended learning) modules to support the Leeds Curriculum Discovery Themes. The aim was to develop modules that are as flexible as possible for students in terms of contact time, to encourage greater ease of engagement with discovery modules. In keeping with the ethos of broadening within the Leeds Curriculum, the modules are multi-disciplinary and involve contributors from multiple schools and faculties. Eight modules have been developed to date. Five of the modules have also been made available either in full or part on FutureLearn to external learners, including three which are available for stand-alone credit.

Digital Discovery Modules developed by the Digital Education Service include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Discovery Theme</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ODFL1600 Environmental Challenges</td>
<td>Creating Sustainable Futures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEOG2661 Social Ecological Systems</td>
<td>Creating Sustainable Futures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOEE1610 Introduction to Creating Sustainable Futures</td>
<td>Creating Sustainable Futures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDES1200 Using Creativity and Innovation to Solve Problems</td>
<td>Enterprise and Innovation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ODFL1700 Discovering Science</td>
<td>Exploring the Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHEM1200 The Extraordinary Chemistry of Everyday Life</td>
<td>Language and Intercultural Understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MODL1161 An Introduction to Thinking Interculturally</td>
<td>Intercultural Understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ODFL1801 Causes of Human Diseases</td>
<td>Mind and Body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEDS1002 Introduction to Human Disease</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>PIED1551 Power and Conflict – an Introduction</td>
<td>Power and Conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPSC1070 Living with Technology</td>
<td>Technology and its Impacts</td>
</tr>
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The aim of our discovery module *The Extraordinary Chemistry of Everyday Life* is to communicate research topics of huge contemporary importance to a wide audience and, additionally, to equip our students with the tools to do the same. The concept was to have eight different research academics giving an overview of eight topics and to illustrate each of these with a case study from a researcher in the field. We wanted this module to be available to all students in the University, with no need for a Chemistry A-Level.

The logistics of bringing together eight academics, eight researchers and students from any programme is an obvious timetabling nightmare and a digital format was almost a necessity. Working with the Digital Education Service, we designed and produced five two-week courses which together make up the content of the module. Students are provided with access to the courses on FutureLearn, where they work through the online material, including videos, text articles, discussion and quizzes, in their own time. There are fortnightly seminars for the face-to-face contact that students rightly value.

Going digital was more than just a solution to a timetabling problem. The ability to use images, videos and links freely enhances the materials and students report enjoying a different style. Through the online discussions, students are exposed to a diverse range of perspectives, including those of clinicians and patients who may be taking the courses through FutureLearn. FutureLearn learners who take all five courses are invited to take a final assessment course through which they can earn standalone credit from the University.

Anyone can access the content within the five courses for free at: [www.futurelearn.com/programs/discovering-science](http://www.futurelearn.com/programs/discovering-science)

In addition, we’ve been able to repurpose some of the resources from the module into an open course aimed at school pupils on Exploring Cancer Medicines that has been viewed by thousands of prospective students around the world through FutureLearn. Another MOOC, also adapted from material within the module on Planetary Atmospheres, will be released soon.

Power and Conflict – Cathy Coombs and Polly Wilding (TEP co-leaders), and Gill Mooney (project researcher)

PIED1551 introduces students from across the University to the Power and Conflict Discovery Theme. Educators, drawn from three faculties and nine schools around campus, worked with the Digital Education Service to produce learning materials in the form of videos, short articles, discussions and animations, all engaging with the themes of power and conflict, but doing so in a way that reflected their particular discipline. The materials are delivered via Minerva.

The digital environment was an ideal medium in which to bring together the various perspectives. The online materials, which are the focus for the majority of student study time, are supported by weekly seminars, providing an opportunity to check understanding of key themes, time for face-to-face learning and preparing students for the assessment. The module had a promising start in semester 2017-18, with 80+ students registering, drawing from such diverse schools as Chemistry, History and Management.

Our LITE-funded Teaching Enhancement Project, ‘Keeping Everybody Happy? Delivering interdisciplinary teaching and learning on a blended learning module’, evaluates the experience of colleagues contributing to and students participating in this module. What stands out in the initial phase of the research is that our evaluation of student experience generally takes place at the wrong time. Provisional findings show that students were far more reflective and observant about their learning experience later in the session, rather than at the end of the module.
Meet the Student Champions for Digital Education
Angela Holmes, Digital Education Service

The University’s strategic mission aims to facilitate the use of digital learning and blended learning across the institution. The Student Champions for Digital Education are students recruited from each of the eight faculties in the University whose role is to support this mission. Student Champions work within their faculty and, more broadly, under the direction of the Digital Education Service (DES). They support and promote digital education and blended learning across their faculty, both to their peers and staff members, and assist with faculty projects aimed at incorporating or improving the use of digital technology in teaching and learning. Overall, they provide ideas and a student perspective on the digital learning materials produced within their faculty, and offer feedback on courses and modules developed by the DES. Student Champions help ensure that the digital learning developed by the University meets the requirements of our students accessing content via internal and external facing learning platforms.

The Student Champions for Digital Education initiative is now in its fourth year – this year’s Champions started their role in October 2018. Their year begins with a networking lunch to meet members of the DES and their fellow Champions, and learn more about the strategy of digital education within the University. They then attend training provided by Beth Snowdon, OD&PL’s Academic Staff Developer for Technology.

Beth plans and delivers the annual training sessions to fit the needs of the University and the students – it ensures that Student Champions are equipped with the necessary knowledge, skills and expertise in the educational applications of digital and social tools.

“At the last four years, the programme has gone from strength to strength. It complements the University’s strategic vision towards a more enhanced, innovative, flexible and inclusive education. It’s a real pleasure working with our students – I always learn so much from them.”

Beth Snowden, OD&PL

These include:

- The monthly Digital Programme Approval Group (dPAG), which approves digital course proposals and quality assures the development of credit bearing and non-credit bearing online digital courses and modules created by the DES.
- The Digital Education Committee, which oversees the strategy and operation of digital education across the University.
- Lecture Capture Multimedia Management Operation Group meetings.
- Other University-wide groups involving digital and online learning.

Student Champions are also encouraged to attend the annual Student Education Conference to promote digital education and disseminate the progress or results of their projects.

DES team members provide Student Champions with support over the year and arrange several review meetings to check on the progress being made towards their faculty’s project goal. As well as academic and DES support, a Student Champion’s work is overseen by a Project Co-ordinator (who usually worked as a Student Champion the previous academic year). Their role is to support the initial meetings between the Student Champion and their Faculty Academic Champion for Digital Education, assist in the training the Student Champions at the start of the academic year, and facilitate mid-project review sessions and end-of-project evaluations.

The Student Champions for the 2017-18 session were: Ahmed Al-Basha, Project Co-ordinator (Faculty of Engineering); Nicholas Clare (Faculty of Mathematics and Physical Sciences); Mohammed Samir (Faculty of Biological Sciences); Hannah Webbe (Arts, Humanities and Cultures); Sarah Bostan (Faculty of Business); Mohamed Kamal (Faculty of Engineering); and Priscilla Ehikioya (Faculty of Medicine and Health).

They were involved in a variety of projects, including the development of online resources, consultation on lecture theatre design, app testing and the creation of videos for staff.

Specifically:

- Ahmed Al-Basha, Project Co-ordinator (Faculty of Engineering), a University of Leeds graduate, has been an invaluable contributor to...
the Student Champions programme over the last three years. After being a Student Champion for two successive years, he became a Project Co-ordinator for the 2017-18 cohort. Ahmed implemented a consistent approach to best practice use of the VLE/Minerva within the Faculty of Engineering. He created a standardised template with enhanced navigation, which all schools in the Faculty can now use.

- Nicholas Clare (Faculty of Mathematics and Physical Sciences) helped to digitise exam papers for students to use as part of their revision activities. He also created screencasts to help students with their statistical analysis techniques – showing them step-by-step how to use different functions within MS Excel to make the process as efficient as possible. These resources are now available on Minerva for future students in the Faculty to use.

- Mohammed Samir (Faculty of Biological Sciences) compiled a list of videos that were suitable for use as teaching resources for Faculty staff. He ensured the videos were educationally appropriate, accessible and engaging.

- Hannah Webbe (Arts, Humanities and Cultures) conducted an independent research project to develop a plan for a digital platform that would improve communication and interdisciplinary discussion across the Faculty. Focus groups and meetings with both staff and students helped inform her findings and she presented these to the Deputy Pro-Dean for Student Education. The information was subsequently passed on to an interdisciplinary Teaching Enhancement Scheme strand run by the Faculty, where it is hoped the project will be taken forward.

- Sarah Bostan (Faculty of Business) piloted a discussion board on Minerva that allows students to discuss questions and post tips relating to specific exams in their School / Faculty. It is hoped that this can be expanded so that all students have a safe online space for peer-learning.

- Mohamed Kamal (Faculty of Engineering) considered the tools, resources and blended approaches that staff were using to deliver their teaching as part of the new joint school in China. He identified areas of successful practice that the teaching staff could use in reviewing the first year of the engineering module taught in Chengdu. Mohamed also piloted a digital tool to help students with their mathematics. He helped develop new questions; collated and reviewed existing content; enhanced existing question sets (e.g. through improving feedback); and supported other student interns and staff to use the tool.

- Priscilla Ehiyoika (Faculty of Medicine and Health) used student feedback to create a guide for lecturers to use when uploading, delivering and presenting lectures for Minerva. This resource will be provided to all staff to encourage more consistent use of the VLE across the faculty. Priscilla has been appointed Project Co-ordinator for the 2018-19 cohort of Student Champions.

In addition to these projects, Student Champions also reviewed and contributed to projects developed by the DES, ensuring that the digital content fully considered the student perspective.

Becoming a Student Champion is a great opportunity for students to develop their skills in digital education, and offer practical support to academics and other students in their faculty. They are looking forward to engaging with and supporting you in your faculty projects.

You will be able to meet all the Student Champions at SEC2019 in January (see p.12). Find out how from them in person how they are progressing in enhancing and promoting digital education across the University and how they could work with you.

Establishing a digital literacy framework for Leeds

Digital technologies have been responsible for major changes to how we do things. Pause and consider what you’ve been up to today; chances are there will have been a good number of tasks you’ve completed using digital resources in both your work and your home life. The same very likely holds true for your students. This extends to the learning and teaching environment, where you have access to a range of resources with the potential to enrich both how you teach and how your students engage with learning and research. To make the most of the opportunities around us, staff and students alike arguably benefit from becoming confident and proficient users of digital media, capabilities which can be described collectively as ‘digital literacy’. In the case of our students we know that this could also enhance their employability, so it’s doubly important that we help them understand the why, what and how of using digital tools and resources.

The Digital Literacy Framework Task and Finish Group (TFG) has been convened to consider in more detail what this means in the context of learning and teaching at the University of Leeds. Our remit includes:

- Devising a Leeds Digital Literacy Framework that is relevant for our staff and students;
- Establishing a package of training and development opportunities to support digital literacy;
- Producing any associated policies, procedures and guidance needed for the implementation; and
- Supporting pilot use of the framework to better understand and evaluate how it can be used in varying disciplinary contexts, to inform the full roll out.

In addition, we are working closely with a related development in digital education – the Blended Learning TFG — and this includes overlap in our respective group memberships. We are doing this to ensure we can offer you a joined-up set of guidance, resources and development opportunities.

The Digital Literacy TFG membership is drawn from academic colleagues with leadership roles for digital education, student representatives and professional service colleagues with expertise in technologies, digital literacy, and educational and staff development. We are keen to ensure that our work is informed by existing staff and student practices and experiences at Leeds. We are also researching relevant developments and resources from the wider sector, such as the JISC funded work on ‘Digital Capability’ (visit www.jisc.ac.uk/rd/projects/building-digital-capability for further information), and exploring and sharing practice with colleagues at other universities, particularly — but not limited to — our White Rose network.

The timeline is broadly to explore and develop during term one, implement with pilot departments in terms two and three, evaluate in term four and support a wider roll out in 2019-20.

Further details will follow regarding the channels for feeding in your ideas and experiences in addressing this topic. In the meantime, please get in touch at academiceday@leeds.ac.uk using the header ‘Digital literacy framework’ if you have examples you would like to share with us.

Louise Woodcock, OD&PL

Digital literacy
#SEC2019 – bookings now open!

Student Education Conference | Learning Spaces
Thursday 10 and Friday 11 January 2019

Bookings are now open for SEC2019. The theme – Learning Spaces – examines the many arenas, both physical and virtual, in which students can learn and develop, create and collaborate, forge partnerships with communities, or cross thresholds and take risks.

Keynotes
We are delighted to announce that Adam Finkelstein (McGill University, Canada) and Bart Rienties (The Open University, UK) will be delivering the two SEC2019 keynotes. Adam will focus on how next-generation learning environments can impact learning and teaching, while Bart offers a critique of how data analytics can be used to unlock learning and teaching.

SEC2019 programme
The conference offers two days of breakout sessions, plenaries and a panel discussion. There is also an exhibition area in Parkinson Court over both days, providing ample opportunity for networking. Abstracts for all sessions and exhibits are available at goo.gl/G7jsne

Booking your place
Bookings will remain open until Friday 14 December 2018 – popular sessions do book up quickly, so make your booking soon so you are able to attend your first-preference sessions.

Please note that we are only able to accept bookings made through our online booking form, which can be found at goo.gl/G7jsne

This is an internal event and is free to attend for University of Leeds staff. Lunch is provided on Day 2, refreshments available throughout.

Follow us
We’ll be building up to #SEC2019 on Twitter, so if you’re not part of the conversation already follow us on @leedsteaching and join in!

Digital Education Service News
Carol Elston, Head of Digital Education Service

The past year has seen the formal launch of the Digital Education Service (DES) at SEC/DigiFest 2018. By promoting the services provided by the DES, we have been able to work with colleagues from around the University to define their motivations for online learning, and determine the most appropriate platform and format for a new course.

Highlights of this year have included a major corporate project supporting the Goldman Sachs Foundation with the design and development of twelve weeks of learning. 10,000 Women is an ambitious interactive course designed to support women from developing countries to grow their business. This innovative course is delivered on the Coursera online platform and encourages participants to develop a personally defined business growth plan as they work through the course.

The DES has also worked with the International Student Office to design and develop a resource hosted on Minerva to help international students feel at home in Leeds. Three versions of the resource have been developed to support undergraduate, taught postgraduate and postgraduate researchers. Feedback from colleagues has been positive and we look forward to receiving comments from those joining the University this academic year.

This year also marked the University becoming a Coursera partner. Working with the Faculty of Engineering, we launched an Engineering Specialisation in Managing Major Projects. This Specialisation is CMI accredited and includes an optional capstone project leading to University credit.

We move into the 2018/19 academic year with a busy schedule of course development, including our first Transition to Masters course developed with the Institute for Transport Studies. We are also working with the Faculty of Biological Science with the development of two courses designed to support international undergraduate student recruitment. With many more projects on the agenda the next year is shaping up to be varied and busy.

If you would like to know more about the services on offer please visit the DES website at digitaleducation.leeds.ac.uk or email digitaleducation@leeds.ac.uk with specific questions.