

## Bridging the Gap scenarios

Institution	Institutional perspective on the issue	Learner perspective on the issue
<p><b>Brotherton University</b></p> <p>A post 1992 institution with diverse intake of mainly young, local students, aiming to offer an excellent teaching experience and improve its academic standing.</p>	<p><b>Information and knowledge handling</b></p> <p>Academic knowledge practices revolve around evidence base, critical evaluation, referencing, peer review.</p> <p>Learners are expected to have or quickly acquire research capabilities e.g. use of library catalogues, journals, referencing</p> <p>Plagiarism detection services are used to ensure students are not cheating.</p> <p>We focus on academic skills which means (e.g.) an expectation that writing will be well structured, original, critical.</p> <p>There is a role for web 2.0 technologies particularly to support collaborative knowledge building and the development of communities of knowledge sharing and practice</p>	<p><b>Information and knowledge handling</b></p> <p>Google/Wikipedia are the preferred information retrieval tools. Students find university library resources much harder to search.</p> <p>Many students are poor at online research and evaluation of online resources.</p> <p>Sharing and reusing information is commonplace among peer networks, and entirely legitimate (wot's plagiarism?)</p> <p>The 'Google generation' tends to adopt a cut and paste, patchwork approach to writing.</p> <p>Most learners encounter web 2.0 applications as consumers, not producers, of content.</p>

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<p><b>University of Wessex</b></p> <p>Campus-based 1960s university with strongly centralised services and identity, in the process of expanding into new buildings (teaching and accommodation) on a neighbouring site.</p>	<p><b>Support for personal technology</b></p> <p>We are committed to ensure basic access and entitlement (institutional email account, log-in for Athens and the VLE) plus induction into using them on our University PCs.</p> <p>We don't have the resources to support better-off students with whatever latest technologies they are using.</p> <p>Network security and reliability is paramount. We restrict use of applications that might compromise this.</p> <p>We have good cable network coverage e.g. all study bedrooms for students that have their own PCs. Plus wireless coverage in main lecture theatres.</p> <p>Skype is not available in halls of residence. Mobile phones can only be used in halls of residence and social areas, not in teaching areas.</p> <p>We will take action against students abusing social networks e.g. making derogatory postings about members of staff.</p>	<p><b>Support for personal technology</b></p> <p>Most students use gmail or other personal email: they expect their devices and services to be accessible both within and without institution</p> <p>Learners expect access to learning resources and experiences via web services that are not device-specific.</p> <p>Learners need to be encouraged to explore different technologies and find the options that work for them.</p> <p>Laptop ownership is very high - over 90% at some institutions studied. Expectations for wireless access are increasingly the norm.</p> <p>Students rely on Skype etc for keeping in touch with families.</p> <p>Students often set up their own Facebook (etc) groups to provide support, share resources and organize social activities.</p>

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<p><b>Grantchester Metropolitan University</b></p> <p>A successful post-92 institution looking to capitalise on its reputation by extending its market reach, particularly to international and post-graduate students.</p>	<p><b>Curriculum design</b></p> <p>The curriculum is an essential aspect of how the institution defines itself and its relationship with students: students come to our university to study our curriculum.</p> <p>Digital technologies are an important enhancement to the existing curriculum.</p> <p>There should be a balance of independent, teacher-led and collaborative activities in the curriculum.</p> <p>Staff skills in ICT and digital literacy are the main barrier to transforming the curriculum.</p> <p>We need to incorporate web 2.0 technologies like wikis and blogs into the curriculum.</p>	<p><b>Curriculum design</b></p> <p>Students will search the web for curriculum resources from other institutions to meet their goals.</p> <p>Students are increasingly digital in all aspects of their lives. What does this mean for the curriculum of the future?</p> <p>Students differ markedly in their preferred approaches to study (time, place, social/solo, technology).</p> <p>Students will often collaborate and share skills informally, but can require incentives and opportunities to do so more formally.</p> <p>Text-based technologies are all very well, but younger learners are increasingly used to image-based and interactive content. What are the implications for teaching of gaming-type environments and virtual worlds such as Second Life?</p>

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<p><b>University of Oldminster</b></p> <p>A Russell Group University that has identified a need to update its curriculum and make it more relevant to the needs of graduates, but with an aging academic staff and significant pressure on finances.</p>	<p><b>Assessment</b></p> <p>We need to reduce staff time spent on preparing students for assessments and giving feedback.</p> <p>Assessment is the hardest aspect of the curriculum to change due to long lead-in times for re-validation etc, conservatism of external examiners.</p> <p>This is always the worst aspect of our performance on the National Student Survey. We're not sure why though.</p> <p>Digital literacies? We're too busy responding to the widening participation and graduate employability agendas.</p> <p>We can't afford to personalise provision, particularly assessment and feedback which requires so much staff time.</p>	<p><b>Assessment</b></p> <p>Assessment can have the most immediate impact on how students experience learning and where they focus their efforts.</p> <p>Digital literacies need to be embedded into the curriculum, including assessment, if they are to be practiced and prioritised.</p> <p>Assessment drives the use of technology: students will use technology in strategic ways to meet assessment criteria.</p> <p>Students really value the opportunity to choose their own time and mode of assessment, and have some say over what they submit.</p> <p>Student enjoy practising for assessments e.g. using diagnostic and formative tests.</p>

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<p><b>Ampleford College</b></p> <p>An FE college with strong links to the local University (delivering some HE in FE and foundation courses), which has adopted the same Virtual Learning Environment to enhance course delivery and ease transition.</p>	<p><b>Use of the VLE</b></p> <p>The VLE sends out an important message that the college is up to date and preparing students for life in the digital world</p> <p>All staff has had training in the basic functions: using the VLE to post messages, upload lecture notes and key course documents.</p> <p>We know that most functions of the VLE are under-used but so long as some staff is using them to support student learning, it is a worthwhile investment.</p>	<p><b>Use of the VLE</b></p> <p>Learners demand consistency of use and are highly critical of poor or irrelevant use of the VLE by staff.</p> <p>Many learners find VLEs don't meet their high expectations of interactivity, accessibility, personalised interface and speedy response.</p> <p>Learners are frustrated that external communication tools (googledocs, gmail, MSN etc) are not available to them and the tools that replicate these functions in the VLE have poorer functionality, are slower, and require separate logging-in.</p> <p>Learners will not always use institutional discussion forums, preferring to create their own instead. Also many learners prefer to record lectures or borrow friends' notes rather than download notes from the VLE.</p> <p>VLE may not be an accessible route for learners with disabilities (LexDis). Learners with poor ICT skills do not find use of the VLE intuitive.</p>

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<p><b>Brotherton Technology College</b></p> <p>Mainly 16-19 year olds but increasingly younger learners studying for diplomas. Wanting to help learners develop digital skills but concerned about safe use of network technologies.</p>	<p><b>Support for personal technology</b></p> <p>Only around a quarter of our students have laptops they bring onto campus, so support for personal technologies isn't really an issue.</p> <p>At the moment we don't allow students to use the college network to access social networking sites for security purposes and use of mobiles in classrooms is banned as they are a distraction.</p> <p>Our focus is to ensure basic access and entitlement to technology, and security and reliability of institutional systems.</p>	<p><b>Support for personal technology</b></p> <p>The vast majority of learners have mobile phones and many of these now have functions that could be used to support learning.</p> <p>Most 16-19 years olds have their own social networking pages and invest time in presenting themselves online. There is strong evidence of learners using such sites to support learning informally.</p> <p>There is wide variation in how learners experience technologies, ranging from empowered to inhibited.</p> <p>Cost is an important factor in determining whether and how technology is used.</p> <p>Learners need to be encouraged to explore different technologies and find the options that work for them.</p>

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<p><b>Carson Green College</b></p> <p>Small town college with limited local employment: Strong links with those employers and focus on work-based learning. Pilot site for a regional e-portfolio and skills passport scheme.</p>	<p><b>Supporting transition and progression</b></p> <p>All students take study skills modules which include ICT.</p> <p>Students have personal tutors who support their portfolio building and PDP. They also monitor for any difficulties in transition and progression.</p> <p>Most learners don't have access to computers in work/placement so we don't prioritise e-learning approaches.</p>	<p><b>Supporting transition and progression</b></p> <p>Learners are often introduced to the technologies they will use for learning just once, right at the start of their courses, when many other issues are competing for their attention.</p> <p>Older learners and returning learners who have been employed in non-computer-based industries may have little or no ICT experience.</p> <p><i>When I started the course I was going through a nightmare... If the kids were at school I couldn't turn on the computer'.</i></p> <p>Learners develop digital skills more effectively if they are embedded into their studies and are helping them to reach their personal learning goals.</p> <p>Learners experiencing difficulties in their studies usually go to family and friends, other students or the Students' Union, rather than their tutors.</p>

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<p><b>Pool Meadow College</b></p> <p>Small college of further education which provides a range of full, part time, and community based courses as well as being a Centre of Vocational Excellence in Catering and Hospitality.</p>	<p><b>Flexibility and personalisation</b></p> <p>The college has a Student Support Service that provides additional learning support for students who have learning difficulties or disabled students.</p> <p>An initial assessment allows the support team identify the needs of the student and ensure that support arrangements are in place throughout the student's stay with the college.</p> <p>Support includes provision of specialist technologies where appropriate.</p> <p>But students cannot make lasting changes to their desktop preferences: only within a particular session.</p> <p>Personal devices such as mobile phones are subject to restricted use policies as they are a distraction to serious study.</p>	<p><b>Flexibility and personalisation</b></p> <p>Disabled learners and learners with specific learning needs have to be able to customise their laptops and desktops.</p> <p><i>"At home, I have changed the background colour on some websites using an add-on to the browser Mozilla Firefox. So my Google website has a dark blue background instead of white. It's easy on the eyes that way and I find it easier to do in Firefox compared to Explorer."</i></p> <p>All learners expect to be able to personalise technology to meet their own preferences.</p> <p>Use of familiar, personal devices can help learners overcome negative feelings about formal learning situations.</p> <p>Disabled learners are often agile adopters, with strategies and work-arounds for technology use. Other learners can be unwilling to explore the options, and there are few opportunities to experiment or learn from each other.</p>