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Digital Literacies in Situated Practices

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Web 2.0 characteristics
It is best to think of Web 2.0 in terms of its characteristics (JISC, 2007):

- Interactivity
- User-generated content
- Personalization
- Content consumption and production
- Social networking and communities
- Personal identity

Digital Literacy
"The capabilities which fit someone for living, learning and working in a digital society" (JISC, 2013)
This is the definition adopted by the project team.
In the questionnaire participants who asked what this definition means to them.

"A key message for institutions is that policies and processes need to support development across different academic and support roles in a range of ways. Supporting student digital literacies tends to be the focus of support activities but teaching staff need support to help address confidence and capability issues and support staff need to continually develop skills and knowledge." (JISC, 2013)

Dissemination and outputs
Online resources in the form of case studies including video that detail best/effective practice examples across disciplines including library services
Contribution to staff development seminars and conferences
A published framework for interdisciplinary development of digital literacies positioned in relation to literature and sector developments

Phase 1 results
Beyond an understanding and knowledge of different types of online tools, digital literacy is about the application of those tools to help/solve a problem and knowing how to get the best from those tools.

Key drivers to use technologies in teaching and learning.

For examples of results see the inner circle “Phase 1 results”.

Timeline:
- June – July: Design and pilot questionnaire
- August – September: Refine and administer questionnaire
- October – February: Analyse questionnaire data
- March – April: Develop interview and focus group schedules
- April: Conduct interviews and focus group sessions
- August – September: Relate findings to literature and sector developments with a view to

Methodology
A qualitative practitioner research methodology informed by principles of action research is adopted. The diagram to the left shows the four project phases.

Project phases
- Phase 1: Survey of academic staff
- Phase 2: Focus groups with academic staff
- Phase 3: Survey of MSc Students
- Phase 4: Focus groups with Students

Project objectives
Scope staff and student support services and academics’ perceptions and applications of Digital Literacies in Higher Education via a survey.
Investigate further potential tensions and identified issues related to use and development via focus groups and interview.
Collate and disseminate best/effective practice examples via online platforms and seminars.
Relate findings to literature and sector developments with a view to develop a framework.

Motivation
To promote digital literacies in teaching and learning.
Many Web 2.0 tools used to promote digital literacies are not designed by educationalists or developed specifically for teaching and learning, but there is an increasing demand and call for teachers to use them to share content, support learners and for inter-institution collaboration (Horizon K-12, 2014).

References:
- Poster template provided by Felix Breuer under a Creative Commons License and available from: http://blog.felixbreuer.net/2010/10/24/poster.html

Contact us
Regardless of discipline we would be happy to hear your comments/thoughts and welcome your contribution. Please email I.Zoubir@mdx.ac.uk

Research and teaching interests
- Web 2.0
- User generated content
- Personalization
- Social networking and communities
- Career and identity management
- Communications and collaboration
- Critical literacy
- Information literacy
- Teaching and learning

Data analysis
Some questionnaire items were closed (non-free text responses) and provided good summary data. These were generally followed by an open question.

For examples of results see the inner circle “Phase 1 results”.

Digital literacy elements
JISC (2013) funded project work led to the identification of seven elements of digital literacy:
- Media literacy - Information literacy - Digital scholarship - Learning skills - ICT literacy - Career and identity management - Communications and collaboration

What are we and other Universities doing to foster digital literacies?
This project aims to identify our institutional awareness of these literacies and how we can enhance teaching and learning in this area. Other universities who participated in the Jisc call (Middlesex didn’t) for example, LSE have set up a student group of "Digital Ambassadors."