

Creating an excellent blended learning experience: implementing learning that is digital by design

Sarah Knight, Head of learning and teaching transformation, Jisc

Overview of this session

- What have we learnt from the pandemic?
- Listening to students
- What is the role of digital in transforming learning, teaching and assessment?
- Next steps

In one word, sum up your aspiration for digital learning, teaching and assessment at your university?

Share this in the menti or add to the chat

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“For years, employers have said they don’t get graduates who can think, turn up on time or have interpersonal skills. I’m really interested to see them talking about creativity and critical thinking now, because I think that’s what we should be doing in higher education. We don’t know what the jobs of the future are. Who knew 20 years ago that we would be desperate for cybersecurity specialists?”

Dr Liz Marr, Pro-Vice Chancellor (Students), The Open University

Listening to our students – what are students experiencing?



Listening to the voices of our learners and students

November 2021 – April 2022

45,224 student responses to our 2021/22 surveys focusing on the online learning context

- **33,726** higher education students from **41** organisations across the UK
- **11,498** further education learners from **26** colleges/sixth form colleges across the UK

Full reports available from:

<https://digitalinsights.jisc.ac.uk/reports-and-briefings/our-reports/>



Students' preferred mode of study



- Most students preferred to be taught using a combination of on site and online learning or mainly on site.
- 42% mainly on site
- 45% a mix of on site and online
- 13% mainly online

- Advance HE/HEPI Student Academic Experience Survey 2021 found that 57% of students would prefer to learn 'mostly in-person'
- The Student Futures Commission found that 66% of students want a blend of in-person and online teaching: 45% of these want an in-person experience supplemented by online activities at least once or twice a week and 21% want to study mostly online, with in person activities once or twice a week

Technology in your learning....



In the last two weeks, which of these learning activities have you carried out online?

- 68% access recorded lecture or class
- 65% live online lecture or class
- 45% mixed face-to-face/online class
- 34% online research tasks
- 26% computer-marked test or practice paper
- 20% live quizzing or polling
- 17% collaborate online eg shared report
- 13% online text-based discussion
- 10% virtual lab, practical or field work
- 5% online game or simulation
- 1% used a virtual reality headset
- 8% none of these

What learners and students are finding positive or negative about online learning



+ Positive

- Efficiencies and financial savings
- Effectiveness of online/digital learning
- Lecture recordings
- Enhanced accessibility
- More opportunities for learning support
- Assessments
- Wellbeing
- Interactivity and ease of communications
- Independent research

- Negative

- Technical and access issues
- Reduced support
- Wellbeing, concentration and motivation
- Unsuitable study space and ergonomic equipment
- Lack of interaction
- Online learning platforms
- Scheduling and timetabling
- Exams and assessment

What do learners and students want?

HE student quote:

“Use a variety of different media such as Padlet, videos, quizzes etc to create an engaging discussion/activity. This makes it more memorable and fun.”

FE learner quote:

“Technical difficulties can ruin the lesson, network issues, wifi, PowerPoint problems, etc.”

HE student quote:

“There is no, or very limited, ability to interact. This is limiting both in an academic sense as well as personally.”

FE learner quote:

“Use more affordable apps, as they can be very expensive. For many years my family refused to pay because of the cost. This affected my learning as I was spending ages just trying to find an online version.”

HE student quote:

“Exams online are much better as they are a test of application of knowledge rather than memory.
Also less stressful.”

FE learner quote:

“No need to travel. It takes me 30 minutes via bus to get to college and not having to go through that daily ... would be heaven on earth”

Building back better: learning from the past to inform the future student experience

Four key areas to address:

1. Digital equity
2. Infrastructure – getting the basics right
3. Pedagogical design and development - making learning interactive and engaging
4. Working in partnership with learners and students



How can we improve?

- Acknowledge that online learning is different and design accordingly
- Ensure students can access the technologies they need
- Improve group and class interactions
- Consult students - work with them as active participants in their study
- Ensure online platforms clearly structured and easy to navigate
- Record lectures – including those that are live
- Improve access to support and online materials
- Communicate and provide timely and constructive feedback
- Make online support more visible and prepare learners for online learning

Benchmarking the online student experience

Access to online learning

Good practice principle	First steps: accessible to all	Developing: consistent	Developed: flexible and adaptable	Outstanding: student led
Students can access online learning when and where they need it	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Core systems are available on and off campus, on all device types and operating systems• Simple instructions and short tutorials on use of core systems are available online• Alternatives and back-up plans for uses of technology in teaching, learning and assessment• Suitable study spaces on campus (eg if home study spaces are not suitable); plug and play for students' own devices, plus secure lockers and charging• Robust, reliable networks on campus and in areas of high student use eg placement sites, halls of residence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support for connectivity both on and off campus• Learning platforms optimised for mobile device use• Device loan or purchase schemes available, including assistive technologies, headsets; financial support for students in digital poverty• IT support available for students using their own devices and accessing services off-site• Study materials available in digital/online format with sufficient subscriptions/licences• Consideration for students participating in different time zones	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Core and subject specialist software is available on student devices and desktop, with sufficient licences• Teaching staff are aware of limitations of student access, and can adapt (eg low bandwidth materials/activities)• Systems are in place to identify and support students with specific online learning difficulties• Funding is available to help students with different needs to access learning online	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Surveys or student panels are used to understand what devices/access students have• Students are involved in developing policies and practices around access to online learning• Student reps/student voice representatives are involved in design for online learning

HE version available from <https://bit.ly/DEItoolkits>

Digital by design



“The recent transition to online learning has been as rapid as it has been impressive. Things which would previously have taken years and years to plan and execute have been carried out in very short order. There has been a huge amount of digital acceleration in universities. But what has been achieved so far has mostly been about adding new tools to old pedagogy rather than general digitally-enabled education across the board. The next big challenge is to integrate digital into the core university strategy.”

David Maguire, interim vice-chancellor, University of Sussex

Review of learning and curriculum design 2022

- Literature review: established approaches; studies and reports from the past 2 years
- Survey of current practice in higher education
- Interviews and vignettes

Outputs

- Survey report by Helen Beetham and Sheila MacNeill published in October
- Summary of models in use
- Recommendations to HE curriculum providers and to Jisc & partners
- Listen to our new podcast <https://www.jisc.ac.uk/podcasts/beyond-the-technology-reviewing-learning-and-curriculum-design-06-sep-2022>

Definitions

- **Curriculum Design:** reviewing, planning and developing a course of study
Formal departmental and institutional process; mapping to graduate outcomes, benchmarks and professional standards; producing documentation
- **Learning Design:** defining how learning will be supported within each course, module or unit
Defining activities, tools and technologies, core content, class sessions and groupings, mode(s) of participation, assignments and assessments, opportunities for interaction and feedback; producing learning materials
- Terms are often used inter-changeably and processes often overlap or iterate
*We use 'Curriculum and Learning Design' to mean **all** the processes of planning and designing a course of study and how students will learn*

Survey responses

Responses

75

HE Providers

16

**Subject Discipline
Areas**

155

Individual responses

1,331

**Free text
comments**

Impact of pandemic: staff, policy, strategy

More specialist staff employed

Some changes to units/departments

Pandemic created a general upskilling of staff digital capabilities

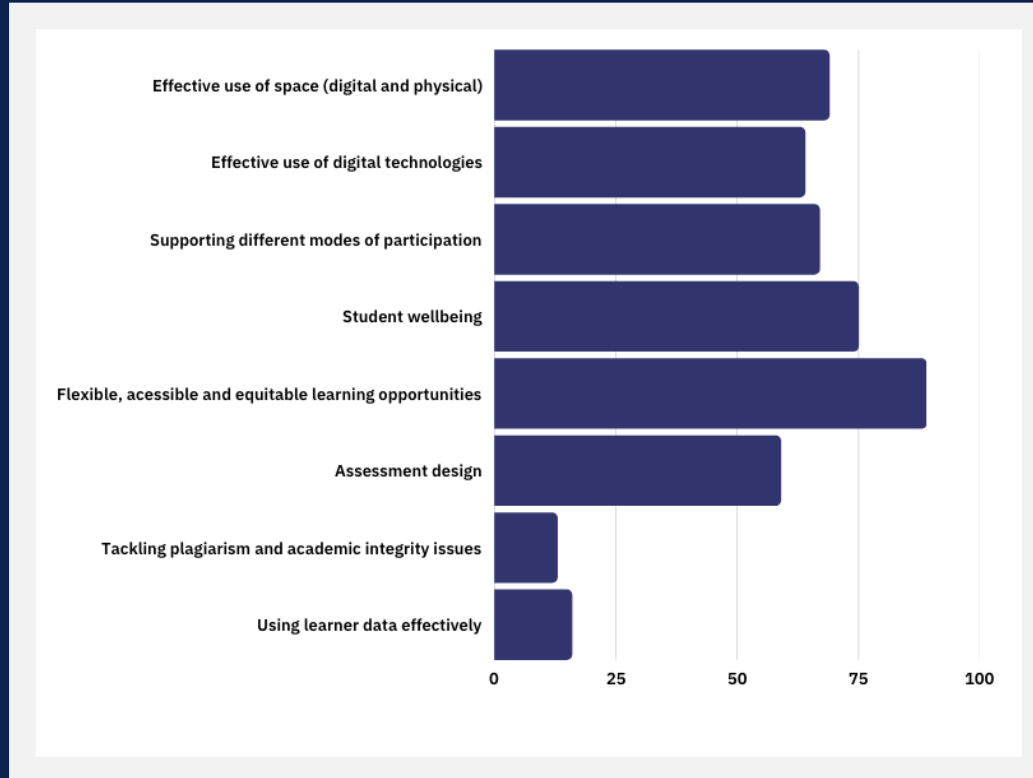
Majority of responses indicated updating/reviewing of teaching and learning strategies

Political impact on strategic tone of models of learning and teaching moving forward

Learning design approaches (including models, frameworks, principles) have impact when aligned to strategic change such as curriculum reviews/refresh

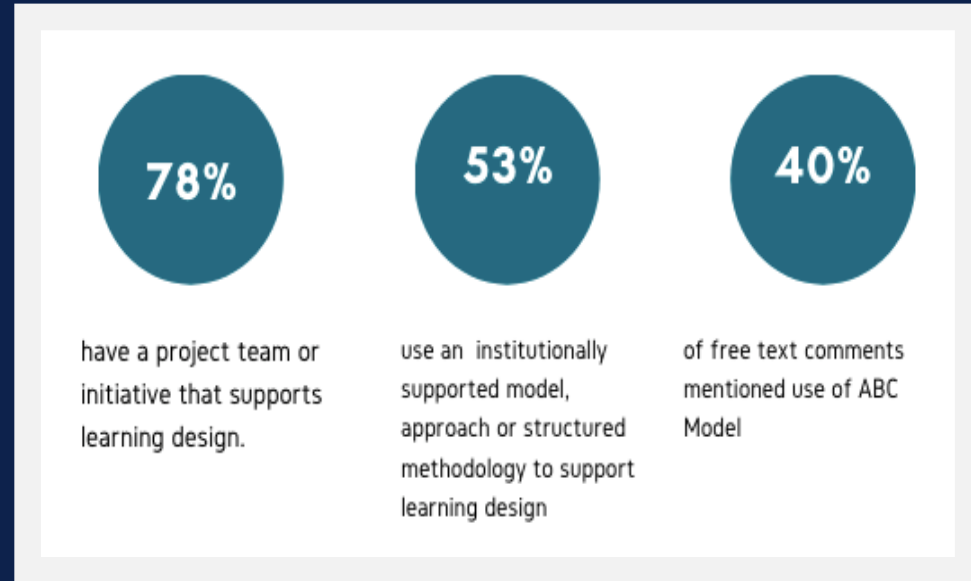
Concerns around student and staff wellbeing

Main challenges to providing a good learning experience in the next 3 years



Models, approaches and methods in use

- Contextual mix of models/approaches actively nurtured and developed by highly skilled support staff supporting implementation of institutional approaches/strategies
- ABC, Carpe Diem, conversational framework, iceberg, constructive alignment, Blooms all mentioned in free text comments



Models, approaches and methods in use

Insights from the desk review

- ca 30 approaches reviewed
- Mix of process- and principles-based
- Processes include ABC, Carpe Diem, ADDIE, Laurillard's conversational framework
- Principles include constructive alignment, Bloom's taxonomy, Laurillard's activity types, TESTA principles of assessment and many more
- Principles often context/HEI specific
- Processes have certain features in common...

Appendix: Models of curriculum and learning design in regular use

Models in use at UK institutions of higher education were identified from a desk review of relevant teaching and learning web sites. They were classified according to our own definitions of *curriculum and learning design*, and according to the authors' assessment of whether they offered principles for design or implied an overall design process, or in some cases both. The developers of these models and their adapters and users at UK HEIs may not share our assessments, but we found them useful

Model	Practice supported	Process or principles?	Key features	Notes
<u>Design process from Jisc (2012)</u>	Curriculum design	Process	Engage stakeholders – Make the case – Enable design conversations – Capture the process – Prototype – Validate – Communicate – Realise – Feedback and review	Supported by: trusted, timely course information – holistic view of student experience – technology as enabler – team-based/CoI approach – responsive to need for change
<u>Carpe diem*</u>	Curriculum design	Process	The original 'course design intensive', Blueprint – Storyboard – Prototype – Reality Check – Review	An approach to running workshops / design sprints – storyboard/timeline process to which principles can be added e.g. as cards
<u>Viewpoints</u>	Curriculum design	Process + principles	As for ABC, the workshop process can in principle be differentiated from the content of the workshop artefacts, allowing different versions (several have been developed)	Workshop process similar to carpe diem with the addition of specific cards based on established principles
<u>Iceberg</u>	Curriculum design	Principles	Design for student retention, originally from the OU: Integrated - Collaborative - Engaging - Balanced - Economical - Reflective - Gradual	Also offers ten 'action points' which are practical pointers W5 : timetabling, task management, materials, assessments, study skills, reflection and planning

A common approach...?

Workshop process or design sprint (90 mins-half day)
involving curriculum team and other professionals

Relevant information e.g. student outcomes, feedback, reflections, prof body requirements, data, student consultations

Aspects to be determined e.g. outcomes, activities, assessments, media, modes of participation + feedback

Principles to be applied

Other decision support e.g. typologies, checklists, algorithms, heuristics, learner personas, design rubrics, examples

Prototype, design, outline, plan etc
showing decisions made

Course handbook, learning outcomes, assessment criteria

Timeline, timetable, workload/assignmt map, task list, learner journey

Spaces, places, learning environments, software

Lecture notes, readings, recordings, materials, interactive content

A young woman with dark hair, wearing a green hoodie and white earbuds, is seated at a wooden desk. She is looking at a laptop screen that displays a video conference with several participants. Her right hand is holding a red pen over an open notebook. To her right, there is an open textbook. The background shows a dark wooden chair and a bookshelf.

Jisc

Principles for good learning, teaching and assessment

Rethinking assessment

The diagram shows how our emphasis is changing ...

- Assessment *of* learning - the institutional quality-assured processes that lead to a qualification
- Assessment *for* learning – learning design emphasising formative opportunities that feed forward to future improvement
- Assessment *as* learning – the lived experience of students and staff when active learners contribute to decision-making and are able to monitor and regulate their own learning

Assessment with a purpose



Principles of good learning, teaching and assessment

	What the principle is	Ways to achieve this
1	Help learners understand what good looks like	By engaging learners with the requirements and performance criteria for each task
2	Support the personalised needs of learners	By being accessible, inclusive and compassionate
3	Foster active learning	By recognising that engagement with learning resources, peers and tutors can all offer opportunities for formative development
4	Develop autonomous learners	By encouraging self-generated feedback, self-regulation, reflection, dialogue and peer review
5	Manage staff and learner workload effectively	By having the right assessment, at the right time, supported by efficient business processes
6	Foster a motivated learning community	By involving students in decision-making and supporting staff to critique and develop their own practice
7	Promote learner employability	By assessing authentic tasks and promoting ethical conduct

Principles of good assessment and feedback guide

ji.sc/assessmentguide

For each of the 7 principles we discuss:

- The context
- How technology can support the principle
- Putting the principle into practice – with examples from across the HE sector and internationally
- Listen to our Beyond technology podcasts on assessment - <https://bit.ly/jiscpodcast1>



Discussion/questions

- What one thing are you going to take away to share with your colleagues?
- What one thing are you going to take away to inform your practice?
- Share in the chat!

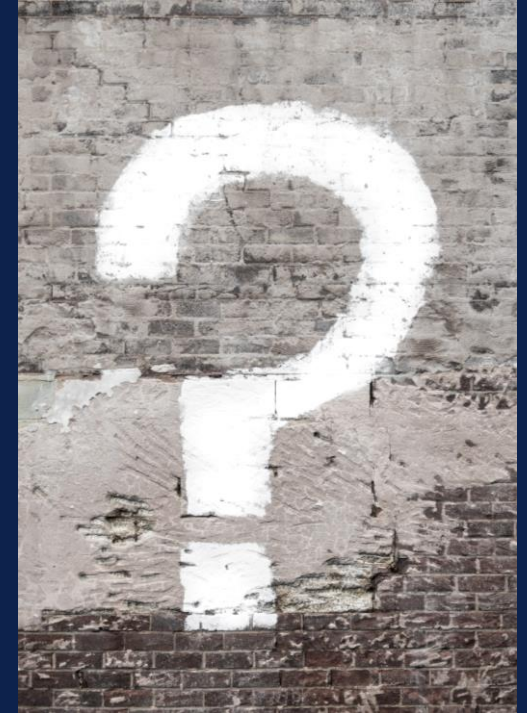


Photo by [Matt Walsh](#) on [Unsplash](#)

A chance to champion your staff and student voice

Those who take part in the 2022/23 digital experience insights survey will be provided with their organisational results, along with benchmarking reports

We offer our digital experience insights surveys across FE and HE for:

- Learners and students
- Teaching and professional services staff
- Researchers

Contact help@jisc.ac.uk to find out more about how you can get involved and to sign up to run your own surveys.

Resources and support

Download our 2022 reports

- FE learners <https://bit.ly/DEI-FE-learners-2022>
- HE students <https://bit.ly/DEI-HE-students-2022>



Resources to help you shape and build your student digital experience and inform discussions freely available

Journey for digital development

- FE <https://bit.ly/FEdigijourney>
- HE <https://bit.ly/HEdigijourney>

Briefings, benchmarking and toolkits:

- Benchmarking the online learner experience (FE)
 - Benchmarking the online student experience (HE)
- <https://bit.ly/DEItoolkits>

Get in touch ...

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