Defining the Digital Literacy Needs of the University of Plymouth

Workshop/symposium: 29 September 2010
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Learning Literacies for a Digital Age
Helen Beetham, Lou McGill, Allison Littlejohn JISC 2009

Digital Literacy materials
for institutional and curriculum change

Cloudworks discussion area with downloadable materials:
cloudworks.ac.uk/cloud/view/4293

LLiDA wiki including best practice examples:
caledonianacademy.net/spaces/LLiDA/

DIGITAL-LITERACIES-PILOT on jiscmail

Workshop outline

12.35 Welcome and opening activity: *defining digital literacy*

12.50 The strategic context at the University of Plymouth

13.00 Activity: *defining how practices are changing* (professional, entrepreneurial, academic)

13.15 Activity: *defining the challenges for learners*

13.30 Discussion: *defining priorities for development*

13.55 Next steps

1. Defining digital literacy

- Write *a definition of digital literacy* that means your dept/unit has some responsibility for it

Defining digital literacy

Digital literacy is defined as the confident and critical use of ICT for work, leisure, learning and communication.

European Commission report DigEuLit, 2006

in terms of: stance
practice
context

Literacy as: foundational capability
cultural entitlement
socially and culturally situated
continually refined/developed
self-transformation

...

Not defining digital literacy

- How are (personal, social, workplace, community, political, academic, professional...) practices changing as a result of digital technologies and networks?

- What kind of graduates will thrive in these new practice contexts? (Graduate attributes...)

- What experiences do students need to have to become fluent in these practices? How do they integrate these experiences into coherent personal, professional and learning pathways?

- How can universities better value, support and develop these practices?
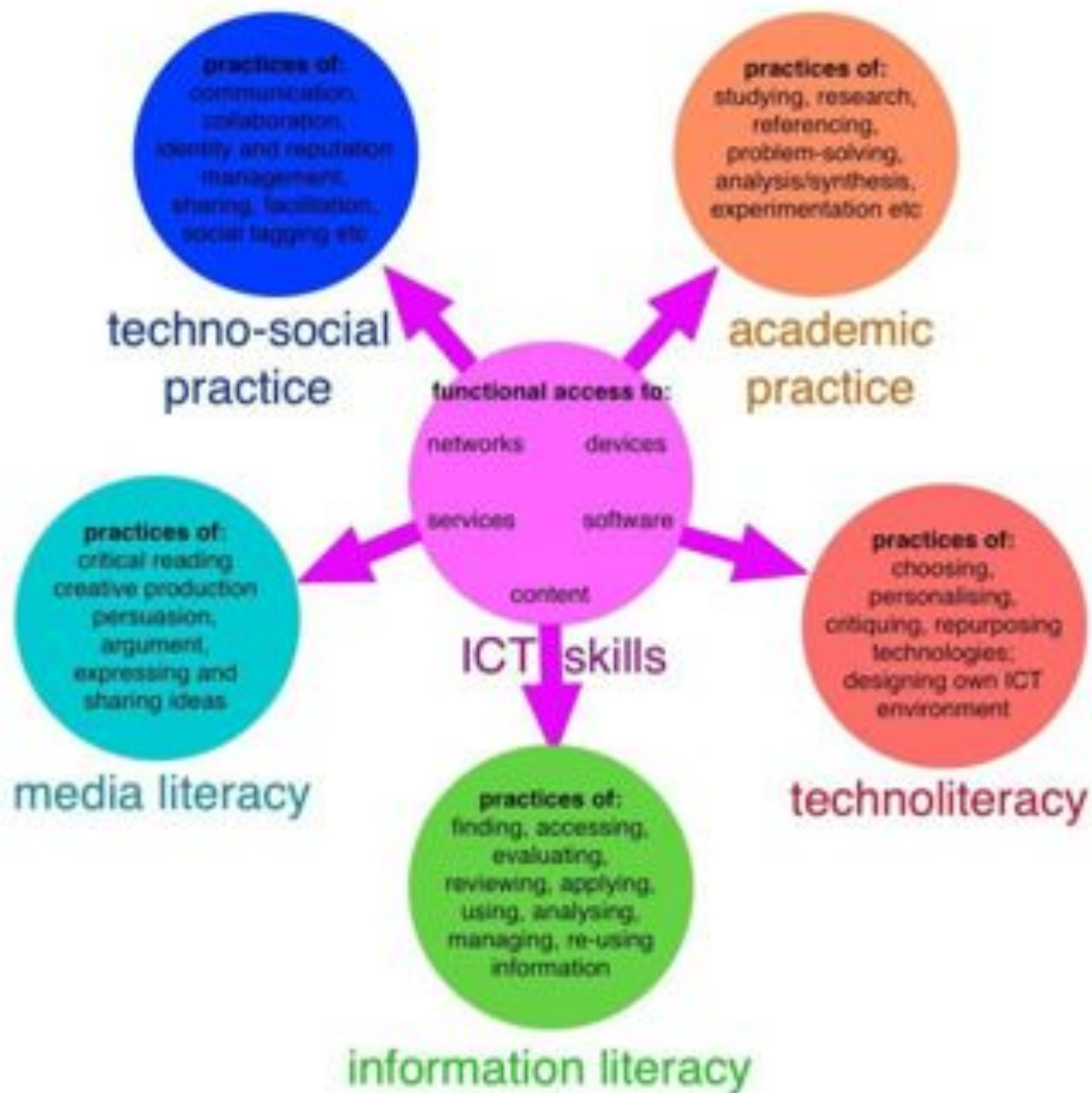
practices

Competence frameworks[8]

contexts

digital lifestyle practices: social networks, sharing, managing digital identity and reputation, family/

personal/ social context

lifelong learning: accessing opportunities, managing learning pathways, maintaining e-portfolio, showcasing achievements

learning context

technosocial
academic
media
ICT
information

digital literacies

digital citizenship: accessing services, political participation, citizen journalism, cultural and interest groups

community context

participation in the global digital economy: continuous updating of skills including relevant ICT skills

workplace context

practices of an informed ICT/media consumer e.g. choosing, using, personalising, repurposing, mashing up...

ICT/media marketplace

Graduate attributes 9

The **enterprise** university

The Edgeless University

the edgeless
university
why higher
education
must embrace
technology

How does the University reposition itself as a site of public ideas, knowledge and innovation in a digital age?

Who are the University's learners?

What responsibility does the University have in relation to digital inclusion? Digital scholarship and professionalism?
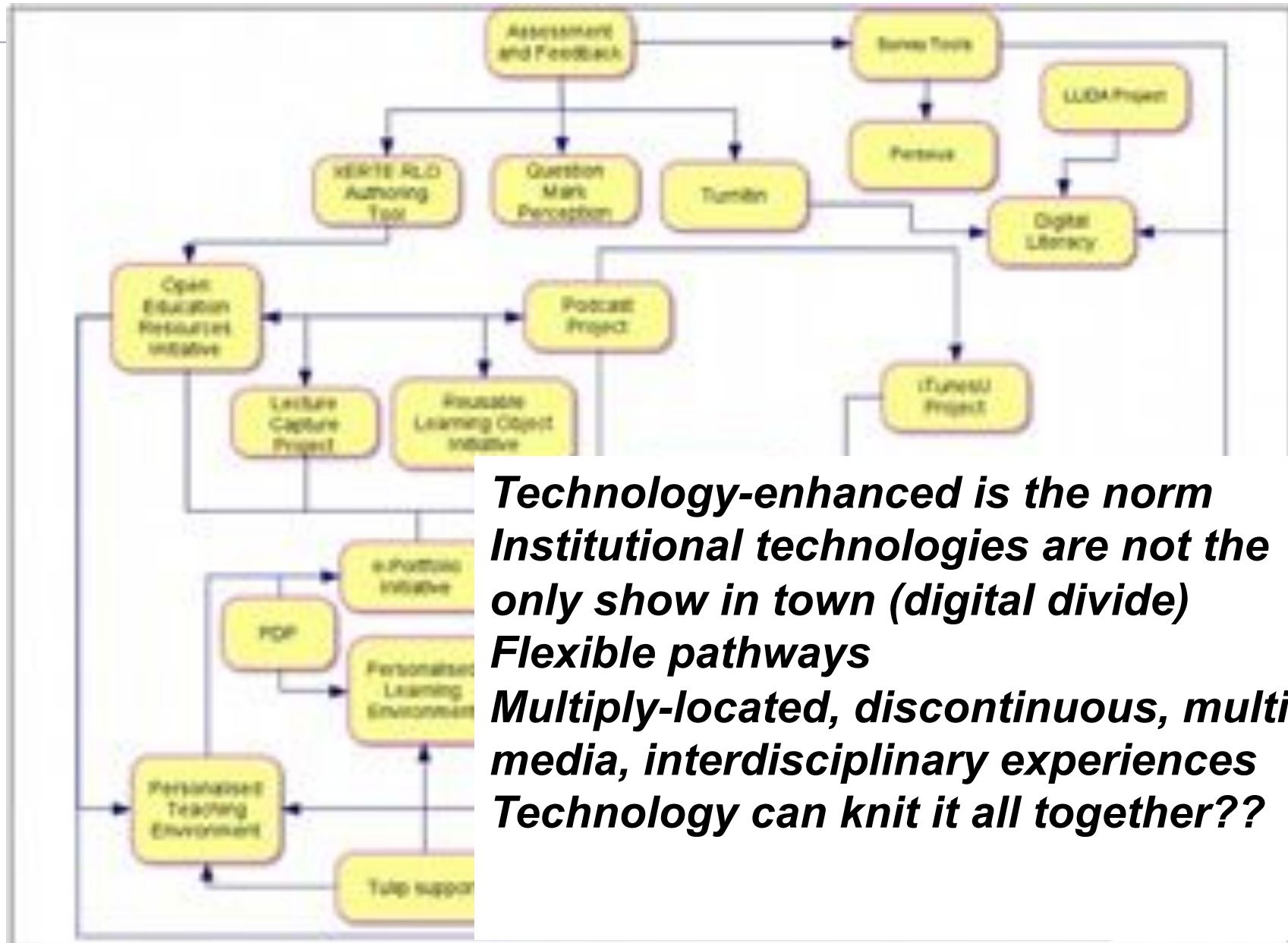
The view from graduate destinations

Employment Level
Modern graduate occupa
New graduate occupatior
Niche graduate occupati
Non-graduate occupation
Traditional graduate occu
Grand Total

Over 60% either professional or associate professional/technical
'Modern' and 'new' graduate jobs are often in ICT and digital media professions
3%+ self-employed
Qualification vs reputation?
changing career patterns
>90% of all jobs require ICT competence

The view from e-learning

Technology-enhanced is the norm
Institutional technologies are not the only show in town (digital divide)
Flexible pathways
Multiply-located, discontinuous, multi-media, interdisciplinary experiences
Technology can knit it all together??

The Plymouth Student view

Gain an advanced knowledge and understanding of your chosen discipline, how it progresses through research and how this research is conducted and applied.

Develop a range of skills useful in both academic and professional arenas, including critical thinking, problem-solving, leadership, team-working, independent learning, numeracy and a capacity for clear communication.

Engage with modern information and communication technologies so that you can respond effectively to rapid changes in the way that information is obtained, used and distributed.

Grow in creativity and self-confidence so that you can inspire and embrace change, lead innovation, seize opportunities and scan new horizons.

Develop your employability, bu
acquire the capacity for lifelong
management.

Develop as a socially responsi
through an understanding of the
outlook and intercultural empat

Ambition One: Through-Life Learning To provide a first-class student experience and develop people who are ambitious, entrepreneurial and autonomous learners.

Social/personal practices

Knowledge and learning practices

*In your area of work, what critical difference is digital technology making?
What new/changed practices are emerging?*

Professional/workplace practices

Media practices

Changing practices: forms and values

Academic values may be newly relevant in a world of open online information and peer networks

Forms of practice can change while underpinning values stick. For example:

- Referencing
- Showcasing/reputation
- Open data/open scholarship
- Peer review
- Critical reading
- Argumentation
- Evidence-based practice

Audio feedback

Image searches

Immersive learning

In your area of work, what are the biggest challenges facing learners?
Relating to the new practices or other issues

Meeting the needs of learners

'What challenge?' the 'native' case

Learners are developing their own digital practices and literacies with little help from the formal education system

- online social networking as a paradigm of active learning in communities (Redecker 2009)

- evidence of deep networking and knowledge building in learners' informal practices (Siemens 2006)

- participative practices as a new model for learning, which formal education should emulate (Jenkins 2006)

Redefining the challenge: against the 'native' case

- Active knowledge building and sharing, e.g. writing wikis, tagging, reviewing, recommending, repurposing, are minority activities to which most learners are introduced by educators (Selwyn 2009).

- Online journals – highly valued aspect of HE digital provision – invariably introduced by academic librarians (JISC 2009)

- Learners ICT skills are less advanced than educators and learners think (Nicholas et al. 2008, JISC 2008-09)

- Characterisation of young people as 'digital natives' hides many contradictions in their experiences (Luckin et al. 2009)

- Learners' engagement with digital media is complex and differentiated (Bennet et al 2008, Hargittai 2009).

- Learners experience many difficulties transposing practices from social contexts into formal learning (Cranmer 2006)

Meeting the needs of learners
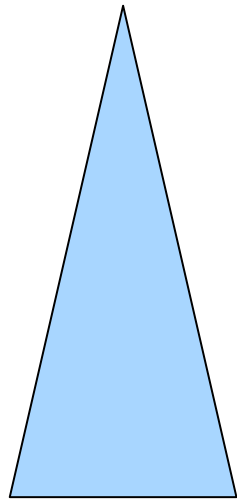
Attitudes, values and preferences

Practices

Skills

Access

1. Understanding development
2. Anticipating pinch points and problems
3. Integrating provision across the learning experience

Literacies development framework 20

What experiences do learners need to have to become fluent in these practices?

How can the University of Plymouth better value, support and develop these practices?

Managing Change

What would success look like for learners?

Curriculum

Learning environment

How do institutions knit these together into:
an integrated learning experience?
21st Century graduates?
a vision for learning and teaching in the digital age?

Learner support

Study skills   **ICT skills**

How do learners knit these together in:
Authentic learning tasks
Applying skills to problems/situations
Understanding feedback/assessment
Personal/professional development
Their own employability/citizenship

Information skills

Priorities for action

How could the practices we have identified be supported:

- by one institution-wide change (strategy, initiative etc)?

- by one change in your area of provision?

- by one change to the learning environment?

- by one change in teaching and learning (e.g. through staff development or curriculum change)?

- by one change in how learners work/study together (e.g. through groupwork, mentoring, student ambassadors, social spaces)?

Next steps

Circulating notes from today

Digital literacies audit

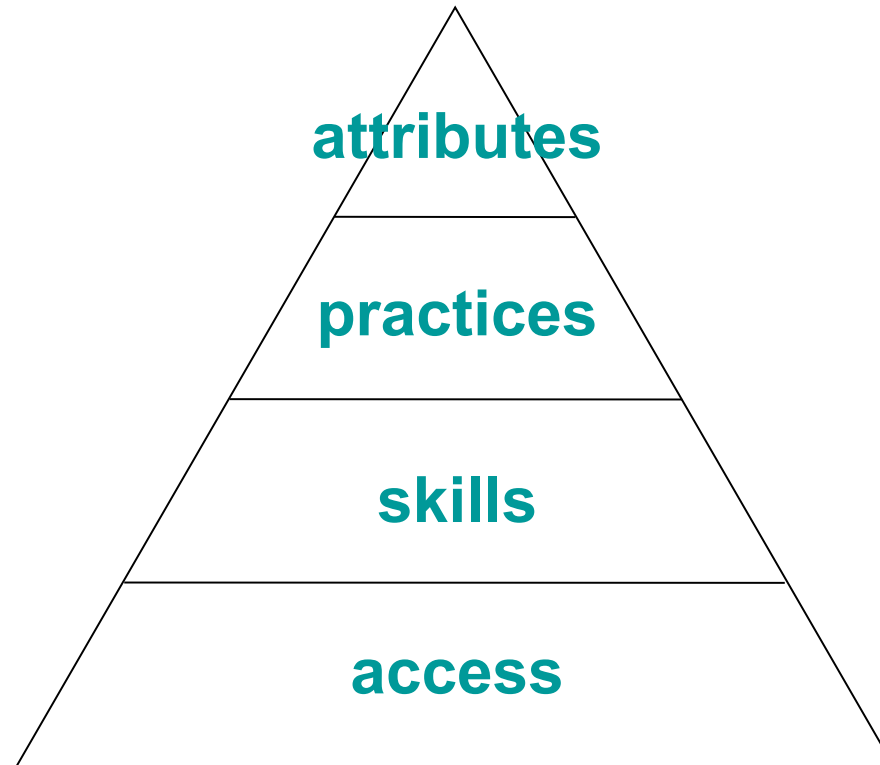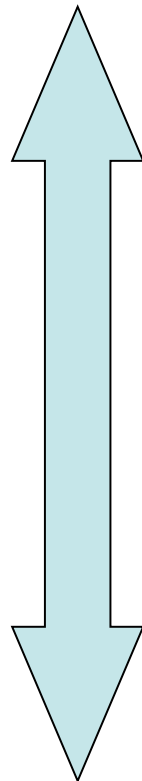Including: focus groups with staff and students

Recommendations for University of Plymouth to be presented to L&T Committee and SMT

The view from elsewhere

- *LLiDA best practice examples*
- *SLIDA institutional case studies*
- **University of Surrey:** *CoLab*
- **University of Bradford:** *DevelopMe!*
- **Oxford Brookes University:** *Digital Literacy mapping*
- **University of Warwick:** *virtual worlds examplar*
- **Thames Valley University:** *ALLE project*
- **University of Glamorgan: Learner Voice reps**
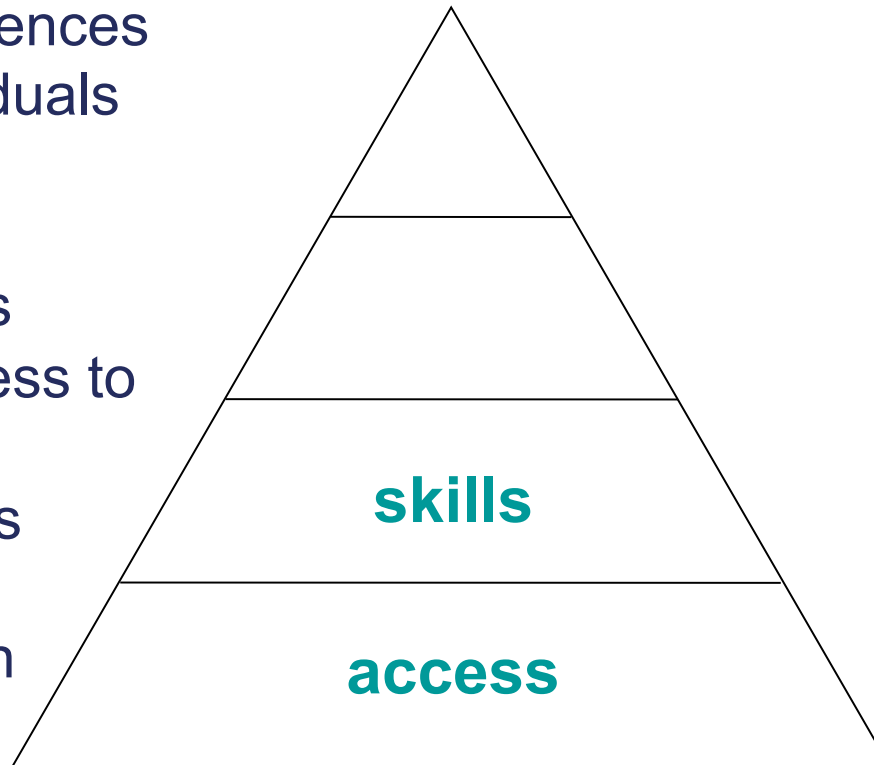
Entitlement

Foundational experiences without which individuals are significantly disadvantaged

Ensuring all learners have functional access to core technologies, services and devices

Developing core capabilities on which specialist/personal expertise can be grounded

skills

access

Enhancement

Specialised, situated experiences which qualify an individual in particular practices

Enabling learners to choose, judge, personalise and integrate technologies

Supporting self-development and self-expression

Enabling learners to use ICT to achieve personal goals and ambitions

attributes

practices