

**Title:**                    **Getting students digitally engaged – as e-Pioneers!**

**Presenter:**            **Nitin Parmar**  
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### **Session Learning Outcomes**

By the end of this session, delegates will be able to:

- Gain an overview of the Digital Literacies agenda at the University of Bath and how this has been shaped by a wider national agenda.
- Have an insight into an innovative institution-wide and cross-faculty programme which sought to embrace student contributions to shape their learning experience
- Identify, implement and effectively evaluate specific areas where digital literacies development can be used as a catalyst for transformational change.

### **Session Outline**

Emerging from a growing evidence base that many students enter further and higher education lacking the appropriate skills to use, and benefit from, the full range of digital technologies, the Joint Information Systems Council (JISC) launched the Developing Digital Literacies Programme in 2011.

At this time, the University of Bath embarked on a JISC funded institution wide project, Professionalism in the Digital Environment (PriDE), which sought to develop a strategic approach to support both staff and students to develop these important and appropriate skills to thrive in a digital society. The PriDE project was underpinned by an objective to define and develop discipline specific digital literacies, which in turn shaped a whole range of mini-projects across the campus (Better@Bath, Summer 2013).

This session will give an introduction to just one of the initiatives that stemmed from PriDE as an outcome, namely, the 'Students as e-Pioneers' programme. The programme funded six projects during the 2013/14 academic year to bring together a similar number of enthusiastic academics.

With 3-4 students recruited for each project, this small group, often consisting of both undergraduates and postgraduates, sought to take a lead role facilitating the delivery of part of a taught unit - thereby, giving useful insight into the ongoing development of programmes of study. Students were encouraged, and incentivised, to engage with the project and maintained learning logs to track their progress and encourage reflection. Data collected from

the evaluation of the programme will be presented, along with some analysis of the findings and direction on next steps.

Over the course of this discussion paper, the author will give insight into how the programme was constructed and give examples of the benefits and challenges of managing such an initiative. Good practice will also be highlighted, which in turn, will give opportunities for colleagues to run similar programmes at their own institutions.

### **Session Activities and Approximate Timings**

- How was a common vocabulary within the university established to increase the recognition of digital literacies development for staff and students? (10 minutes)
- Which institutional priorities strengthened the case for the initiation and delivery of the 'Students as e-Pioneers' programme and how did this inspire the roadmap and increase engagement from academics? (15 minutes)
- Which other operational activities are currently on-going in the area of digital literacies at the University of Bath and how are synergies between them being established? (10 minutes)

### **References**

Better@Bath (2013). PriDE Special Issue. University of Bath. <http://drgn.in/HtUiSn>