

Title: **Digital Literacy and the changing role of the academic developer**

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Abstract:

The discussion paper will present tutors' and participants' experiences of the embedding of digital literacy development into the Academic Practice provision.

SEDA Values

Indicate which SEDA Values may be relevant to your proposal:

An understanding of how people learn	*	Scholarship, professionalism and ethical practice	*
Working and developing learning communities	*	Working effectively with diversity and promoting inclusivity	
Continuing reflection on professional practice	*	Developing people and processes	*

Session Learning Outcomes

By the end of this session, delegates will be able to: Identify lessons learned from UAL's experience that they will be able to apply to their own Academic Practice/Learning & Teaching development programmes.

Session Outline

Increasing staff engagement with appropriate learning technologies is a core aspect of 'digital literacy development'; a relatively young area of enquiry, with arguably the most significant body of research emerging in 2009 from the JISC-funded Learning Literacies in a Digital Age project (Beetham et al. 2009). The JISC is currently funding an extensive Developing Digital Literacies project strand in collaboration with 12 HEIs and 11 professional bodies.

The discussion paper will present tutors' and participants' experiences of the digital literacy development initiatives built into our Academic Practice provision, which incorporates the Postgraduate Certificate, Diploma and MA in CPD (Academic Practice). These initiatives are a core element of UAL's own Digital Literacies project; *Digital Integration into Arts Learning (DIAL)*. Many Postgraduate Certificate courses still offer optional 'e-learning' units rather than embedding a range of appropriate technologies into compulsory units, but from the discussions that took place at the SEDA conference in November 2012 it would seem that

change is on the horizon, and the educational development community is keen to learn how this can be achieved.

From September 2011, the core Postgraduate Certificate units at UAL have incorporated compulsory, peer-assessed blogging activities, online self and peer assessment and the production of video-based Open Educational Resources. These initiatives were described in a case study published by the Universities and Colleges Information Systems Association (UCISA) along with our early findings (Jordan 2011). September 2012 saw these activities take on a more significant weighting within the units, alongside the use of ePortfolios and the introduction of extended technical inductions to support this.

A significant quantity and range of data have been gathered from these interventions in the form of participant interactions and outputs, feedback from participants and the observations of programme tutors. Lessons learned from the first cycle are currently being applied in the second, and more data are already being gathered to inform further developments. So far, the evidence to support the embedding of learning technologies into these programmes as a means of increasing participants' digital literacy is compelling, with many participants having already gone on to use similar technologies with their own students. Some have even obtained external funding for special projects in this area. Several recommendations arose from the initial evaluation that sought to optimise and reconcile the level of challenge with the amount of support provided within the curriculum for the development of technical and soft skills; these are currently being applied with the second cohort. We anticipate that further recommendations and refinements will be apparent from the second round of post-unit evaluation in April 2013.

In addition to presenting our own experience and inviting questions and discussion around this, the session aims to elicit how digital literacy is currently being addressed through academic staff development programmes, and to construct collaborative conclusions on the value and transferability of UAL's approach.

Session Activities

10 minutes: Delegates to respond to question in groups and feedback: **How do the academic development programmes in your institutions promote the development of digital literacy?**

15 minutes: Presentation of UAL experiences, considerations and recommendations.

5 minutes: Initial questions.

15 minutes: Delegates to respond to question in groups and feedback: **What can you take away from UAL's experience to inform the ongoing development of your programme(s)?**

References

Beetham, H., McGill, L., & Littlejohn, A. (2009) Thriving in the 21st century: Learning Literacies for the Digital Age (LLiDA project report). JISC.

<http://caledonianacademy.net/spaces/LLiDA/uploads/Main/LLiDAreportJune09.pdf>

Jordan, L. (2011) "The first rule of e-learning is – no one talks about e-learning": Rethinking approaches to staff development in learning and teaching with technology. In Engaging hearts and minds: Engaging with academics in the use of technology enhanced learning.

http://www.ucisa.ac.uk/~media/Files/publications/case_studies/SSGASG_Engaging