Bridgwater College: iPads enhancing teaching and learning in the classroom

Summary

Bridgwater College have improved the use of technology in the classroom through a small scale deployment of iPads within their sports department. This has directly improved the students’ access to resources as well as enabling them to capture their activity through iMovie; providing a streamlined platform for reflection and assessment. The College has been recognised as providing exemplary services for the use of innovative technology at the prestigious AoC Beacon Awards, gaining a runner up place for Sport in the Curriculum.

About Bridgwater College

The College has an excellent reputation both regionally and nationally as a highly successful provider of education and training. The College:

- Is a Learning a Skills Beacon status college
- Has been designated an ‘outstanding college’ by Ofsted
- Received 11 national beacon awards in recent years
- Meets the matrix standard for information, advice and guidance services
- Has been accredited with the training quality standard for provision to employers

The college’s examination and course results consistently place it amongst one of the best in the South West.

The challenge

Introducing new technology into the classroom is always a challenge in terms of deployment, network infrastructure, staff training and device management.

According to YouGov’s tablet tracker website almost 10% of the UK population owns a tablet device, with some 67% of the share being Apple’s iPad. This is expected to almost double to over 10 million devices by August this year. There is also a growing market for the use of tablet devices in education, with some 20,000 educational apps available from the Apple app store.
Bridgwater College have a strategic objective to enhance the use of technology within teaching and learning and as part of this objective Virginia Power, Resources & e-Learning Manager was keen to investigate how iPads could be used effectively within the sports department to improve many areas, such as:

- Access to resources
- Summative and formative assessment
- Enhance interactive activities within the classroom
- Peer support and communication skills

In order to do this Virginia sought the support of Sports Lecturer Lloyd Dean to trial an iPad within his classroom. After the initial pilot was a success, Virginia bought 5 more iPads, which were made available to staff.

This presented many challenges, including:

- Booking issues
- Ensuring that staff use the iPads
- Staff training
- Data storage
- Copyright
- Purchasing

Data storage is something of a major issue because the iPads can easily be filled to capacity with video, images and audio content, so Lloyd had to investigate cloud-based alternatives for storing the data.

Copyright was another important consideration at the outset because Virginia was concerned that staff may purchase apps on their own credit card.

Considering that some staff had never used an iPad before, this represented many challenges in terms of training staff and presenting new ways of teaching.

**The activity**

Within the classroom Lloyd has used a variety of applications on the iPad; these are directly focussed specifically for sports activities and sessions.

The primary apps that are used include:

- Educreations
- iMovie
- Coach’s Eye
- CoachPad
- Soundcloud
- Cardiology (Animated Pocket Dictionary)
- UCAS
- PostureScreen Mobile
- Journal of Strength and Conditioning
- iOrtho+
- iMuscle

*[www.jiscrsc.ac.uk/case-studies]*
**iPads enhancing teaching and learning in the classroom**

The above video link demonstrates some of the apps that Lloyd uses on the iPad within the classroom.

SoundCloud, has been very beneficial because Lloyd has been able to use this to capture formative and summative feedback and use it to assess the students’ progress. With the SoundCloud app audio can be recorded straight from the device and uploaded into the SoundCloud account online. This enables Lloyd to support different learning styles and enables students to access Lloyd’s assessment at any time using a private link.

"I’m really keen to give student formative on-going feedback through using SoundCloud and with this software I can do it." - Lloyd Dean, Advanced Practitioner.

To help other staff plan and organise their own sessions using iPads in the classroom, Lloyd has created several ‘how to’ guides to show staff how they can use the apps, including other cloud-based storage systems such as Skydrive and Dropbox.

In terms of ensuring that staff use the iPads for professional use only, the college re-wrote their collection development policy and Virgina acquired a government procurement card for the purchase of apps.

As part of the process of creating video and media resources, Lloyd has setup YouTube and Vimeo accounts, which staff are able to use to upload content. Lloyd has ensured that all staff are aware of privacy issues, so they know that the video content and media must be uploaded privately and unlisted/un-searchable.

Lloyd has used iMovie to make some difficult lessons more interactive and fun for the students. This has worked well for anatomy when the students need to memorise 52 muscle types and demonstrate their function. He has also videoed sessions where students have to think of creative ways to demonstrate physiology and anatomy in the classroom.

**The outcomes**

The iPad’s have made a real difference in the classroom; empowering the students with a tool that enables them to engage within interactive and immersive activities.

"It’s more interesting with the new technology.” – Bridgwater College Student

There have been a number of significant outcomes for this project. Students can combine traditional learning with technology, which is helping them to better retain certain aspects of their learning, such as the complex Latin names for the various muscle parts within the human body.

Through apps like the Animated Pocket Dictionary of Cardiology students can see how internal organs work through animated videos as well as use other apps to see how muscles work under strain and evaluation of injuries.
A screenshot showing the anterior muscle system

A screenshot from the iOrtho+ app

When a student was asked what it would be like if the iPad’s were removed from the classroom, this was their response:

“It would be a move backwards I think and a lot less hands on – now it’s much more interactive than before.”

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Educreations has enabled Lloyd to have a place where the students can provide instant feedback and demonstrate activity for a variety of sessions. This can also be accessed online without the need for an iPad.

"The most useful app would probably be Educreation, which you can use to record yourself speaking as well as recording the screen, which is also added to Blackboard. This allows us to look at the notes rather than having to write them down yourself." - Bridgwater College Student

A screenshot of the Educreations app

Through using the PostureScreen Mobile app, the students who are studying personal training and anatomy can find out if their clients have deviations in their spine. They can do this by taking a photo of the front, side and back of the body and the app can detect if they have a kyphotic abnormality, (which is an abnormal rearward curvature of the spine) then the students know straightaway to straighten the erector spinae (which is the deep muscle in the back).

Through CoachesPad Lloyd can improve the tactics for a football team, by analysing set plays, free kicks as well as individual performances. He can also show different scenarios for corner kicks and the kind of positioning and forward runs he wants the team to make. He can also evaluate statistics of the game through notational analysis, which shows all the shots, possession, tackles and data related to the match.

Coaches Eye enables Lloyd to record his students and analyse their technique, which is helpful to enable him to identify if they need to make adjustments to their performance.
“Coaches Eye does a pretty good job for us compared to other commercial products that can cost up to £5000, so for the cost of £2.49 – the app has been absolutely brilliant.” - Virginia Power, Resources & e-Learning Manager.

“We can really start to move away from using paper and it is a fantastic visual aid, so students can really connect to their training.” - Lloyd Dean, Advanced Practitioner.

**The impact**

Although it is relatively early in the facilitation of the project, the iPad's are always fully booked out by staff.

Lloyd recently held reflection sessions with his students to find out what they thought of their course. One of the question’s he asked included, ‘what’s your favourite lesson and why?’

The common response was that the most enjoyable lessons were interactive and involved using technology. Students also highlighted that they liked using the iPads, especially the anatomy and revision aspects involving the iMovie's.

“It’s so good to see new technology working so well, just from seeing the students who are so switched on with using iPads and it’s fantastic to see.” - Virginia Power, Resources & e-Learning Manager

In terms of student performance, Lloyd has already seen an improvement in the quality of the students’ work in comparison to the previous year. Many more students are working towards distinction and merit awards, in comparison to the previous year.

“It’s an extra learning resource that you can utilise, so the more you have to use the better you can do on the course.” - Bridgwater College Student.

“It’s more interesting with the new technology.” - Bridgwater College Student.
The lessons learned

“The important thing about technology, it's not to be seen as just an extra enjoyable add on, it's an integral part of the students' experience.” - Virginia Power, Resources & e-Learning Manager

“From my perspective it's part of your teaching practice and not a substitute for it.” – Lloyd Dean, Advanced Practitioner

It won't all just fall into place just by using iPads, you still need to plan carefully and don't be afraid to make mistakes” - Virginia Power, Resources & e-Learning Manager

Communicate with the students because you might be putting all your effort into something that's not benefitting them. So how will it help them with revision, assessment or exams for example” – Lloyd Dean, Advanced Practitioner

Communicate with staff to find out what problems they have had, what's going well or what have they tried differently, so it's about sharing best practice.” - Virginia Power, Resources & e-Learning Manager

Don't shy away from purchasing apps as they are still cheaper than a textbook and the likelihood is you'll get much more out of the apps in terms of interactivity.” - Lloyd Dean, Advanced Practitioner

Useful links

Bridgwater College

Jisc Regional Support Centre for South West

Jisc RSC South West Mobile Devices and Apps Group

Jisc article: Technology in education – new battle lines

Coach’s Eye

CoachPad

SoundCloud

iMuscle

Educreations

iOrtho+

Cardiology (Animated Pocket Dictionary)

PostureScreen Mobile

Journal of Strength and Conditioning
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