Meeting the challenge of creating a Gen Z relevant Digital Literacy course

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#digifest20
DISCLAIMER

UNDER CONSTRUCTION
About us
Not in Warwick...

• Founded 1965
• Approximately 27k students
• 2.6k academic staff
• Ranked 9th in the UK

(Guardian League Table 2020)

Inside the Library 1969. Prospectus of First Degree Courses 1969-70, University of Warwick Modern Records Centre
New school for Cross-Faculty Studies 2016

What is Liberal Arts?

Liberal Arts at Warwick enables you to study a wide range of subjects and to tailor your degree to your own intellectual interests. You will learn through problem-solving, by examining issues from multiple disciplinary perspectives.
Trying to offer something different

Certificates

The Global Sustainable Development and Liberal Arts degrees are unique in offering students the opportunity, as part of their course, to develop skills which have been identified by employers as being vital for success in the workplace and to have those skills formally recognised through the award of certificates of achievement. All of our students are strongly encouraged to take advantage of the chance to obtain these certificates; attainment of which is noted on their HEAR (Higher Education Achievement Report) which can be shown to potential employers as proof of possession of relevant professional skills. This means that our graduates have the edge over other candidates seeking employment.
Changing personnel

- Years
- Academics
- Library staff
Diverse Elements

- Digital Natives v Immigrants / Visitors v Residents
- Online Identity
- Digital Etiquette / Online Safety
- Copyright
- Digital Humanities tools

- Coding
- Fake News
- Microsoft Office skills
- The Attention Economy
- Lego
- Finding quality online sources
- Linked in
Challenge 1: Defining Digital Literacies

Principal Learning Outcomes

Upon completing this certificate, you will have acquired the necessary skills that allow you to:

- interpret the information you find online in a way that takes into account the cultural, political, historical and other backgrounds of the author/site/organisation;
- identify the rights associated with material found digitally, and understand the best practice in terms of attribution and reuse of this material;
- describe the issues around cyber security and protecting yourself in the digital world; and
- describe the philosophy and etiquette of “the digital age”. 

Icons: Eucalyp, Prosymbols, geotatah from www.flaticon.com
Can we define it?

‘Literacy is not the teaching of skills or competencies but practices, attitudes and behaviours that are context specific.’

*Digital Literacy Unpacked*, ed. Katharine Reedy & Jo Parker, 2019 p. 9
Challenge 2: Skills vs Literacies
Students want digital skills?

‘I would have focused on the creation of different graphs with excel’

‘Maybe how to use certain programs such as excel in detail…’

I feel like digital literacy should focus on improving skills with commonly used programmes. For example I know that a lot of people do not know how to the references function, caption function, etc. in MS word
Or not?

‘I didn’t find it to be useful because the things discussed were things I thought to be fairly basic knowledge about word.’

‘I already knew almost all of what was mentioned in the session.’

‘Although I appreciate the university’s concern with teaching its students about digital literacy but the content covered so far we all already felt very comfortable with so I don’t think it was necessary to spend 2 hours on it.’
Challenge 3: Who even is Gen Z and what should/do they know?

‘They are pragmatic problem solvers, relying on a range of digital devices, apps, and networks for speed and efficiency.’

Roberta Katz, ‘How Gen Z is different according to social scientists (and young people themselves), Pacific Standard, (April 2, 2019), Accessed 11.02.2020

- Multi platform, multi device
- Proficient but not necessarily literate
Is it useful to homogenise?

2016
‘I am also now going to rethink about my FB profile picture and the image I portray online. Very good in that regard.’

2018
‘I found the topics discussed in the session too obvious, too logical - we are the generation called “digital natives”, if not us, who knows about social media, how it works and how to use it?’

2019
Fake news no longer shocking
Want advice on performativity not safety
The water they swim in?
How do we begin to address this?

- Student input on course design
- Signposting relevance and focus
- Encouraging students to share their experiences
So how do you create a relevant course?

• Own the programme
• Clear definition
• Active and student centred learning approaches
• Why as well as how
• *Digital Literacy Unpacked*, ed. Katharine Reedy & Jo Parker, 2019

• Roberta Katz, ‘How Gen Z is different according to social scientists (and young people themselves), Pacific Standard, (April 2, 2019), Accessed 11.02.2020

• Ingrid Nix, Kirsty Baker, ‘Student experiences and perceptions of digital literacy skills development: engaging learners by design?’, *the electronic journal of e-learning*, 11:3 (2013), pp. 207-225

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