Preparing our learners for the information age: a case study from Abertay University

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JISC Digifest
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2018

- Focus on new technology enhanced learning space development @Abertay

Today

- Broader overview of University developments in TEL
- New strategic developments and aspirations (2020-25 and beyond)
• Founded as the Dundee Technical Institute in 1888
• Formal University title in 1994.
• Provision delivered through:
  ➢ School of Design and Informatics
  ➢ School of Applied Science
  ➢ Business, Law and Social Sciences
• Approximately 4200 students, 94% UG
• 35% of entrants direct entry
• Strong Partnership Delivery models
IT Transformation (2013)
E-portfolios (2013)
Full EMA of Courseworks (2014/15)
New strategic approach to TEL (2015)
TEL-enriched active learning spaces (2016 onwards)
MOOCs (with Futurelearn, 2017)
JISC Learning Analytics Programme (2017/18)
JISC Digital Tracker with staff and students (2018)
Lecture Capture pilots (2018-present)
Change to new VLE (2019/20)
New Digital strategy (2020-25)
1. Electronic Management of Assessment

Back in 2013:
• Variability in student satisfaction- quality and timeliness of feedback
• Need for increased emphasis on assessment for learning
• Different scales for units of assessment (17 point) cf. module assessments (10 point)
• Use of full assessment scale in some subjects
• Complex algorithm for Honours classification
• Honours degrees based on student exit velocity
• The 2.i cliff edge….
EMA change management process

- Pockets of individual practice- 2013/14
- Exec policy decision- May 2014
- Intensive staff development- summer 2014
- “Soft implementation”- September 2015
- Full implementation- January 2015

Key success factors:
1. Evidence-based policy
2. Executive- backed resource
3. Multi-stakeholder engagement: managers, academic staff, students, relevant professional services
4. Investment in staff development
2. Abertay Learning Space Design

2016

To
Abertay Learning Space Design, case studies

https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/knowledge-hub/future-learning-spaces-space-technology-and-pedagogy

3. New VLE (2019)- My Learning Space

Throughout your studies in ART204 you will have timetabled lectures and studio-based practical tutorials. The studio environment will provide you with a good computer and monitor to work with, as well as necessary software. Dependent on the nature and aspirations of your work, you may bring along any additional equipment you require but be aware that neither students or teaching staff have administrative rights to the computers. It is typically impossible to install any additional software or drivers unless there are special circumstances.

Timetabled Hours

Lectures:
You are timetabled for a one hour lecture each week. Lecturer are used to discuss the subject of concept art and design and its related topics. There are typically 10 lectures in this particular series, however, this could change depending on the organic nature of learning. Students are expected to take notes during these lectures. Where it is possible, a video recording of the lecture will be taken and posted via MyLearningSpace at a later date. Keep in mind that recorded lecture is no replacement for the real thing, being present is a healthy part of the experience, allowing you to engage with the material and any resulting discussion.
3. New VLE (2019)- My Learning Space

Hi Alastair. Welcome to MyLearningSpace

We are glad to welcome you to MyLearningSpace Abertay’s new VLE this is based on D2L’s product Brightspace. Please take a few minutes to familiarise yourself with Brightspace Core (Video 1:19) or jump right into our Brightspace Essentials - Getting started resources which include important links and library of video playlists.
The University’s new strategic plan (2020-25) has recently been published: https://www.abertay.ac.uk/about/the-university/strategic-plan/

Several supporting, specific strategies are being finalised:
- Learning Enhancement strategy
- Digital strategy
- Employability strategy
- RKE strategy
• Digital technology is set to **transform education**

• Digital transformation is a **consistent theme in the University Strategy** that commits us to ensuring that technology is used in **innovative, intelligent and flexible ways** to **support and enhance** all of our activities

• The **key drivers** for this approach are to:
  • provide an innovative leading edge higher education experience for all our students whether studying on or off campus, from application, to graduation, through to lifelong learning
  • enable more efficient and effective working
  • remove barriers for staff and students
Guiding Principles

• **Digital infrastructure** – cloud first, integrated, intuitive, personalised, automated workflow, reduce the environmental impact, proactive and reactive AI, passwordless authentication.

• **Connectivity and access** – wifi, integrated communications, BYOD, access for partners delivering our degrees etc.

• **Usability / User Experience** – accessible, inclusive, consistent, integrated, dashboard for users

• **Training and Support** – digital fluency for all users and service excellence

• **Governance, Risk and Compliance** – standards, security, risk, document management, accurate robust data from single source, health & safety
• **Smart campus** - analyse, monitor, control and adapt a campus environment

• **Intelligent campus** brings together datasets from both the physical and digital worlds to provide a holistic analysis of the environment

• **Greater automation and granularity of control** – help monitor carbon footprint

• **Digitally relevant teaching spaces**

• University will be **cashless** by 2025 – ambitions for earlier
Learning Enhancement

- Link to Learning Enhancement Strategy
- Inclusive pedagogy
- Different modes of study e.g. blended
- Micro-credentials
- Adaptable, adaptive and personalised learning experiences – may include use of AI
Research with Impact

• Support all research and knowledge exchange activities – bidding, external and internal reporting, open data compliance etc.

• Support remote and on campus research students

• Empower our research staff - infrastructure and applications, technologies for collaboration, technologies which enable research that would not otherwise be possible
Technology to support the business of the university

- Real-time financial information
- Digital contract signing
- Website
- Intranet
- Social media
- Staff team working
- Other activities: employability, learning languages, mental health and wellbeing, reporting of incidents and accidents, health & safety, gender-based violence, student residences etc.

- Commitment to this transformation will depend on changes to our ways of working and culture, as much as to enhanced IT infrastructure and support structures.
New Learning Enhancement Strategy

• Developed over extensive 4 months’ consultation
• Action and outcome focussed- with associated “indicators of success”
• Five key areas:
  1. Teaching Excellence
  2. The Student Journey
  3. Digital Education
  4. Academic Partnerships
  5. Pedagogic Research
3.1 We will embrace technologies and innovative ways of learning that are appropriate for our context, strategic aims and ambitions. To include AR and VR, blended learning, inquiry and PBL, active learning spaces and online education.

3.2 We will undertake a systematic benchmarking of current digital education provision and support and subsequently develop a set of threshold, leading and aspirational standards for digital and online teaching.

3.3 We will enhance the digital literacy of our students and staff through embedding in the curriculum, assessment and digital capabilities including developing a portfolio of micro-credentials.

3.4 We will enhance technology-enabled assessment. This will include: adopting a greater diversity of authentic assessments across our portfolio through harnessing appropriate digital technologies, enhancing formative assessment and moving to complete EMA.

3.5 We will embed Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning and/ or Data Science across the Abertay Portfolio. In addition to curriculum content, we will adopt AI to support student assessment and feedback.
• How might we change culture amongst staff around the importance of digital literacy and associated CPD?

• How might we use digital technologies to enhance student engagement in their own learning and also to support learning communities (on and off campus)
Some take-away messages

• Traditionally Abertay had separate IT, Learning & Teaching and Estates strategies.

• In order to revolutionise our transformation we advocate a holistic integrated approach involving all key actors at all stages from scoping through development, implementation and evaluation.

• We have already undertaken this approach successfully with EMA, new Learning Spaces and a new VLE but our ambitions don’t stop there as we hope we have demonstrated today!
Questions

Contact us

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