Digital Literacies: Reading Digitally Ready Interim Report:Reading Digitally Ready IR Collated

JISC

Project Information			
Project Title	Digitally Ready		
Project Hashtag			
Start Date	July 2011	**End Date**	July 2013
Lead Institution	University of Reading		
Project Director	Prof Shirley Williams		
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Partner Institutions			
Project Webpage URL	http://blogs.reading.ac.uk/digitallyready		
Programme Name	Developing Digital Literacies		
Programme Manager	Paul Bailey		
Reporting Period	Oct 2011-April 2012		

Section One: Summary

(unchanged, but enhanced with hyperlinks to supporting documentation)

The University of Reading has a culture of 'digital adoption' at its core, with an eagerness from senior managers and decision-making groups to be in the vanguard of innovative working practices and technologies to help drive the University – staff and students - forward.

One of the University's corporate objectives 2009-2013 is to further improve the employment prospects of its graduates, and to ensure ALL of our students have the opportunity to experience work-based and placement opportunities whilst at the University. Supplying the digital skills to enable this is core to this project.

Across the University there are many examples of good practice in the area of digital literacies . However, there is no joined-up thinking and approaches are patchy. This project represents an exciting opportunity to document and replicate good practice from one place to another while capturing enablers and constraints.

The project will provide resources for all members (staff and students) of the University to help to understand how best to implement skills to harness these and other technologies for their current role, but also as an individual living, learning and working in a digital society.

The project aims to develop a cross-institutional strategy for recognising and enhancing the digital literacies for all members of the University of Reading. This will be grounded in good practices that exist across the University and beyond; along with the needs of stakeholders within the University community and amongst the wider community, including employers.

Having developed a strategy we will implement change management approaches aimed primarily at digital literacies for student employability.

It is intended that these actions be user-centric in design to address the barriers to entry for users, capturing best practice from around the University and developing these into dissemination activities, for instance 'digitally ready' workshops. It will also include the engagement of two 'student ambassadors' who will act as the conduit between the project team and student body. Promoting the project and ensuring the student voice is fed back into the development of the activities.

We have prepared a new briefing note to aid communication of the project objectives

Section Two: Activities and Progress

Report on activities against your original objectives and work packages for the reporting period (September 2011 – March 2012).

Briefly outline and explain any changes to your approach or any further details you can add to your project plan, for example as a result of findings from your baseline process.

If appropriate, attach an amended copy of the relevant sections of your project plan.

Work Package 1, Project initiation, Complete (Continued review of stake holders)
Work Package 2, Research, Complete (Outcome from Baselining exercise also now means this is a continuous process)
Work Package 3, Institutional Audit, On schedule
Work Package 4, Strategy Development, On schedule
Work Package 5, Pilots phase 1, In progress, On schedule
Work Package 6, Strategy Implementation, In progress, On schedule
Work Package 7, Engagement with the Community, In progress, On schedule
Work Package 8, Dissemination, In progress, On schedule
Work Package 9, Sustainability, In progress
Work Package 10, Evaluation, In progress
Work Package 11, Project management, In progress

Colour key
Completed
In progress, no concerns
In progress, potential challenges
Current challenges impeding progress
Activity aborted

Section Three: Outputs and Deliverables

Outputs are products or services produced as a result of your project's activities that others can use. Refer to the Guidance on Project Outputs (https://jiscsupport-programmesupportresources.pbworks.com/w/page/50784952/Developing%20Project%20Outputs) on the Design Studio and to the mapping of programme deliverables sent to you for consultation by the synthesis constant.

What outputs, if any, have you produced in this reporting period? Include any outputs, including interim and work in progress that you can share with other projects. Are there any other outputs you would like to share at this time? Are these available through the Design Studio? Please describe, provide URLs or attached documents etc.

Briefly outline and explain any changes to your planned outputs/deliverables or any further details you can add, for example as a result of findings from your baseline process.

Is a version of your baseline report being made public? When and what URL (for example on the Design Studio)?

Baseline Report
The baseline report and baseline report for employability have been circulated to senior management, and relevant committees at the University. Includes initial interviews which have been re-used in workshop settings.

Evaluation note: Feedback on the report has generally been positive, but some responses have meant we have had to re-phrase the project description several times in order to try to communicate the objectives to some groups. The process itself was over a shorter time-span than is really appropriate, and full cooperation from colleagues would have been aided by having senior management level 'sign up' before the baselining process.

Evaluation plan/ evaluation framework
The original evaluation plan has been supplemented with a (beta version) evaluation framework emphasising the need for an adaptive, agile method to be used that allows for evaluation of the evaluation methods themselves.

Evaluation note: it was felt that a supplemental adaptive approach to the original project plan was necessary, in order to allow the plan to take account of the changes in both the technological, and cultural, landscapes.

Project Blog
The project blog is a great success with excellent contributions from around the University, and some lively discussions in the comment threads. It requires some more caretaker work, adding suitable categories and publicising links to relevant topics.

Evaluation note: The blog has been cited as a particularly good example of a JISC project blog. However, there are issues to be resolved, including issues of choice of 'handle' used by contributors, references to 'the project' which are to projects other than Digitally Ready (which make sense in the full posts, but which can be confusing if someone is skim reading), use of categories and tags.

Briefing papers/ communication to committees
We have recently produced a new, clearer, briefing document to help communicate the project to colleagues.

Evaluation note: The briefing document has undergone several revisions, and there is a clear tension between different cultural norms at the institution with regard to how complimentary such documentation should be.

Self assessment wiki under development
> (based on e-Skills National Occupational Standards) - currently negotiating some issues regarding copyright position
>
> Plans to also try to evaluate the e-skills Passport system, with a view to embedding either the wiki or passport system in the staff review process and the student personal tutoring system.

Evaluation note: Although not fully developed yet, it is clear that the design needs to be re-considered to take in to account the need to protect the copyright of e-Skills in the NOS framework.

Workshops
Currently in design - 2 workshops for undergraduates encouraging learner-led approaches such as the Pirate Model enhanced with another A - articulate (thanks to Enna Guggi for the enhancement). Outline of workshop model is listed on the Learning Resources page

Hints and tips/ in progress

Hints and tips are being contributed to the [project blog](#)

Evaluation note: All contributors need to be shown the WordPress Categories and tags user interfaces, and encouraged to attempt to correctly classify their posts.

Motivation survey

A [DigLitMotivatorsSurvey](#) survey is being designed to try to gather data to help ascertain what factors help motivate people to develop their digital literacies.

Teaching and Learning Showcase events

CDoTL have started organising a [new series of informal Teaching and Learning Showcase events](#) in 2012 on topical issues:

The Use of Technologies to engage students in their learning (report due to be online by mid-May).

Digital literacies for student employability

Further research on Employability issues is being undertaken, and draft questionnaires and other research tools are detailed in the [Digital literacies for student employability](#) section

Section Four: Evaluation

Briefly outline and explain any changes to evaluation plan as a result of project plan revisions and baselining, and provide any additional evaluation planning tables, tools, reports etc. you have used (beyond the table in the project plan).

Provide brief details on progress to date on your plans for evaluating the outcomes and impact of your changes to digital literacies on the range of stakeholders in your department(s) / institution (including your baselining activities). Include details on the sources of data that will be used to evidence the changes. What evidence have you collected so far? Please share details of any evaluation tools in use at: https://jiscsupport-developingdigitalliteracies.pbworks.com/w/page/52312729/DL%20Projects%20Shared%20Evaluation%20Space
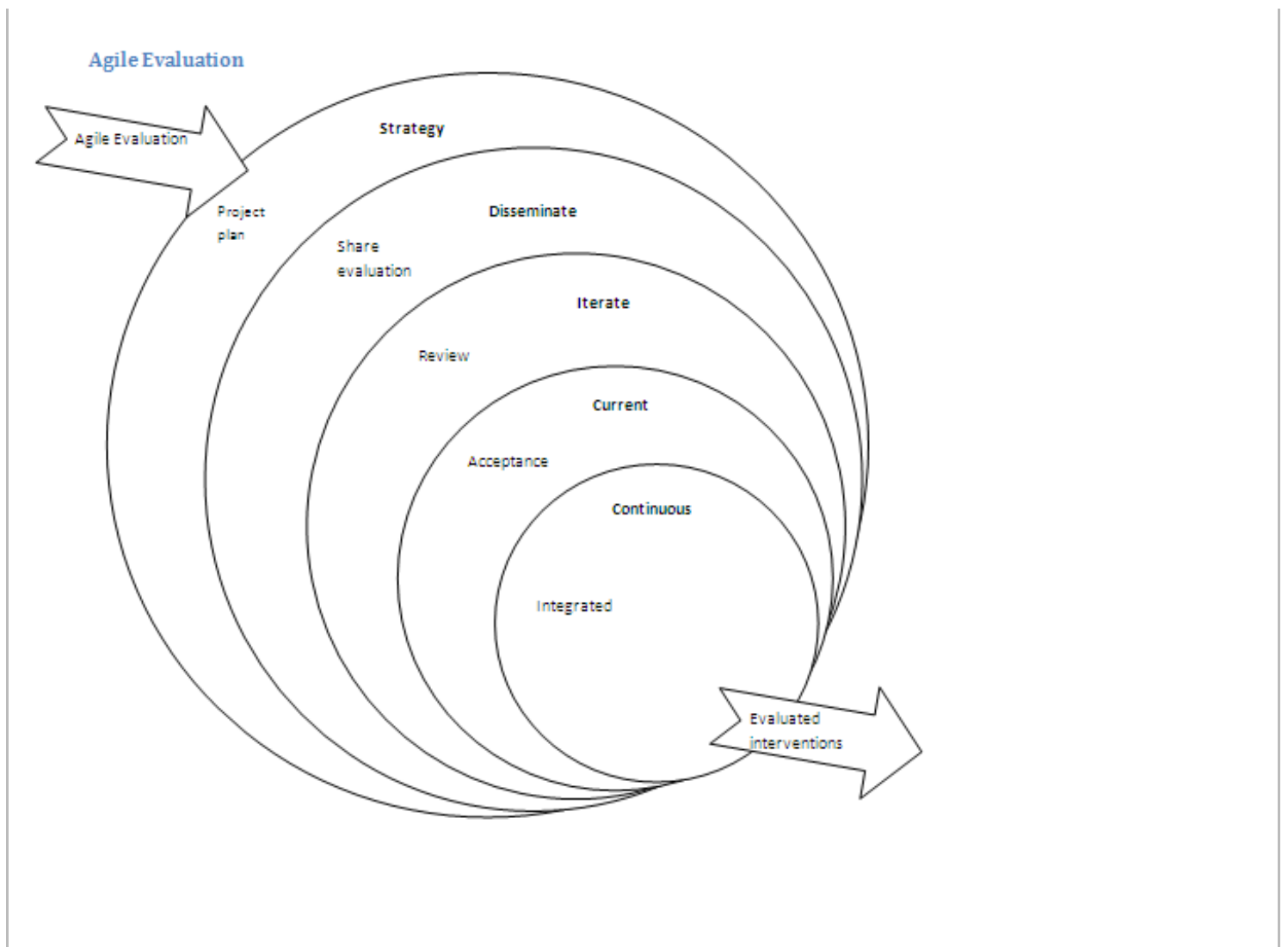
Please outline the key evaluation activities you will undertake in the next 6 month period. Please tell us briefly, the rationale/purpose for activity, planned method, participants, and timing.

Evaluation is embedded in activities, and is a continuous process, including project team, steering group and participants.

Please note that the results from the evaluation process should be shared in Section Five: Outcomes and Lessons Learned.

See [Evaluation Plan](#)

Continuous evaluation model

Agile Evaluation

Agile Evaluation

Project plan

Strategy

Disseminate

Share evaluation

Iterate

Review

Current

Acceptance

Continuous

Integrated

Evaluated interventions

Section Five: Outcomes and Lessons Learned

Outline any changes to practice brought about or influenced by the activities described in section two or by use of the deliverables described in section three.

The target audience of the project - staff and students throughout the institution, coupled with the collegiate structure of the university and the diversity of skills, current needs and aspirations make it impractical to conduct a thorough audit of practice and expertise (see baseline report)

Increasing use of blogs at departmental levels (may be coincidental timing?)

Outline lessons learned so far as the result of your baseline process and any other activities undertaken towards evaluation (section 4). Please include a summary of the findings of your baseline report. Include a link or provide a summary of any evidence that can support these lessons.

From the baseline report executive summary:

 Initial ~~recommendations~~ 'key points' in brief:

- **The agenda should be given further impetus by explicitly stating the term 'digital literacies' (or similar) in University policy documents as appropriate.**

- **Infrastructure planning would benefit from greater agility and readiness to respond to fast changes to technology and the expectations of students and staff.**

- The diversity in support could be strengthened by encouraging 'joined-up thinking' and better collaboration and communication of good practice between the service providers.

- Individuals could benefit from self-diagnosis tools to promote personal life-long learning around digital literacies.

- Provide channels for people to share good practice and provide motivation within the community, raising awareness and shaping attitudes.

- Motivation could be improved by recognition of the digital skills and literacies needed by many roles across the University, e.g. administrative roles, and recognition that these roles are changing and the implications of this for job descriptions.

- Develop Learning & Teaching to enhance the student learning experience and address student expectations as well as possible efficiency gains from capitalising on the affordances that technology provides to handle increasing numbers of students.

- Develop the delivery of L&T within the Internationalisation Agenda, continuing professinal development (CPD) programmes and to support potential future innovations.

- Support the redesign of the curriculum to capitalise on digital technologies, enable the development of pedagogy, and promote the development of digital literacies for staff and students, especially in the employability context.

Outline how these findings will inform the project going forward.

These key points outline the priorities identified, and proposed activities are focused on moving towards them, both through improvements to institutional policies and strategies and at a more practical level.

Colleagues involved in staff training highlighted a desire for an online tool which would allow for self-assessment of skills. Feasibility of producing or re-using a suitable tool within the time-frame of the project (effectively by September) is being undertaken.

Do you have any updates to the technologies you plan to work with at: http://prod.cetis.ac.uk/search.php?search=developing+digital+literacies

Please highlight any outcomes/lessons which are confidential (that you don't want to be shared with the wider community through the JISC website) and require further discussion.

Highlight any accessibility issues which have emerged and how you have addressed them in the project.

Diversity

The diversity of digital literacies, needs and aspirations amongst members of the University mean that it is important to focus on the key issues of promoting the employability agenda and encouraging self-directed independent learners. There is a key issue in raising awareness that improved digital literacy is of direct benefit to the learner (staff or student) and that awareness is a key element in promoting motivation to engage with elevating one's own skill levels.

Institutional change

The institution, in common with many in the HE sector, is in a state of frequent, possibly continual, change, with reorganisations and potential threats from externally imposed regulatory changes. Although improved digital literacies will improve individuals' potential, and future opportunities, there is a natural self-preservation response to focus on the immediate job or course requirements rather than engaging in extra effort to develop new skills to meet possible, as yet unknown, circumstances. Changing institutional culture to encourage staff and students to embrace the opportunities which will present themselves is likely to be a key success factor.

Section Six: Communications and Dissemination Activities

Report on any communication or dissemination activities with project stakeholders or the wider community which have taken place during the reporting period.

What strategies have you found useful for engaging stakeholders at this stage of the project?

A major difficulty in eliciting informative views from stakeholders is that there is a cultural desire to please - by inviting people to 'bring their own whine' and focusing on problems, it was possible to get more of a discussion going. However, encouraging reflective practice remains difficult.

In what ways have you integrated evaluation into stakeholder activities?

The self-assessment framework will be (almost) "self-evaluating", given access to learners' responses over time. We are considering the potential for a tool to support reflection in relation to students in work placements, and this will include a facility to 'close the loop', allowing the reflective practice to also inform the support and curriculum design, thus embedding evaluation in the process of facilitating learners development.

Attach or provide URLs for any relevant dissemination or presentation materials, and please ensure these are linked to from the Design Studio. Include details of any publicity the project received during the reporting period.

Would you be willing to run a webinar on the work of your project in the next 6 months? If so please indicate broadly when would be a good time.

Cluster meetings:
 Hosted 1st cluster meeting at Reading
 Attended cluster meeting at Exeter, led session on challenges of institutional change.

Dissemination
- PELeCON (Plymouth Enhanced Learning Conference), Apr 2012 "Letters to Santa" (abstract)
- PELeCON workshop "RU Digitally Ready" (abstract)

Communications -
    Blog (ongoing)
    Briefing papers (2nd version),
    Ongoing meetings with stakeholders
        Focus groups (e.g. eLearning Coordinators)
        Engaging with existing communities (e.g. SNOW (brief note about one session))
        Schools (e.g. Systems Engineering)
        SEECC

Currently in planning: Digital Literacy Celebration Day (early July)

Interim Report (this document)
 Evaluation note: There will be a requirement to repot on progress to the Steering Committee. However, there are doubts that the wiki format will be suitable for them, which raises questions regarding digital literacies. Additionally, it is noted that 'collated' versions of the wiki format reports have been generated, which undermines the 'web' nature of a wiki document. However, it is also noted that a web style document does not naturally lend itself to being presented as a print document, and that this also raises questions of digital literacy and whether there should be a requirement for print versions of these reports.

Section Seven: Risks, Issues and Challenges

Please discuss any changes in risks, whether they have become issues and whether new risks have been identified.

Risk of staff changing roles or leaving institution
    e.g. potential impact on use of RED award
Institutional reorganisations

Report on issues or problems that are impacting on the development and implementation of the project. Detail what impact any issues may have on the achievement of project targets, and set out how you plan to tackle these issues. Report on any unexpected project achievements.

Cultural issues e.g:
    Institutional use of language ('recommendations' are only made by committees)
    "IT" interpreted variously as 'hardware' through to 'socio-technical environment'
    Preference of some for provision of infrastructure rather than personal development
Funding model
    (2nd year continuation of project)

Negotiation of re-use of eSkills resources
    Development of wiki based on NOS requires copyright/licensing agreement
    Use of Passport site may have cost implications/require some bespoke modifications
Engagement with project by Vice Chancellor

Probability (P) 1 – 5 (1 = low 5 = high)	Severity (S) 1 – 5 (1 = low 5 = high)	Risk Score (PxS)	Detail of action to be taken (mitigation / reduction / transfer / acceptance)
~~2~~ 1	5	~~10~~ 5	- identify alternates who can step in as necessary - clear documentation of work as progresses to enable any handover - have contingency plan(s) Reduced risk as notice period now matches remaining employment period for contract staff (most likely to move on). However, resourcing in 2nd year unclear - involve other people in activities where possible appropriate - schedule annual leave in project planning
2	2	4	
2	3	6	- have contingency plan(s) - build-in flexibility to plans - alter task schedule, if possible - monitor progress against planned timescales
1	5	5	- build in contingency plans - Senior management represented on the project Steering Group
3	4	12	It is not entirely clear that there are sufficient resources to continue with the project in the 2nd year

~~1~~ 2	4	~~4~~ 8	• project to report to relevant institutional committees • engage local champions with project • membership of key staff on Steering Group Some resistance from committees, but buy in by VC mitigates risk • identify pilots early and offer incentives for engagement
2	4	8	• engage key stakeholders with project early • membership of key stakeholder representatives on Steering Group • identify external pilots early and offer incentives for engagement • strong dissemination strategy HE sector is aware of issues and appears keen to engage. Direct impact on project unlikely, and JISC programme management mitigates risks
~~3~~ 2	~~4~~ 3	~~12~~ 6	

Section Eight: Collaboration and Support

Discuss any collaborations that have been forged with others, for example other projects and professional associations or national bodies, and any resulting outcomes.

SCONUL (see blog posts from [Helen Hathaway](#))
Examining possible collaboration with eSkills for re-use of their IT skills competency framework (e.g. see [section 3 Outputs and Deliverables](#) self assessment wiki)

Internal collaborators regularly attend project meetings, including IT Services, Students Union, Student Employment, Experience and Careers Centre, Centre for Staff Training and Development, and the Library.

Please summarise one aspect of support that you've received from the programme and support team and how it has influenced the direction of your project.

Synthesis framework from Helen Beetham has provided a robust structure for providing perspective of the project.

Please outline how you have made use of one aspect of the feedback received on the project plan (including evaluation planning).

How have you found the process of working with your critical friend and cluster? Please highlight what has worked well and what hasn't worked as well, and any recommendations for how to improve the process.

To quote the InStePP project:
• **we only seem to share/ chat etc when cluster group meeting or a cluster event is imminent**
• **would be nice to know what other clusters have been discussing too that can be shared across programme without having to trawl for the information or guess who has it. Could critical friend or programme support team provide bulletins. pointers suggestions to help us keep track and in touch ?**

Do you have any additional needs, requests or suggestions for support not already highlighted in your project plan?

Please provide more notice of potentially disruptive reporting requirements; e.g. interim report in wiki is good, but would have been much easier to manage if the decision had been made and communicated at the beginning of the project. Requirement for video with stakeholder views, especially in relation to the Easter break, takes a disproportionate amount of time, although hopefully will be re-usable as part of the internal communication efforts of the project.