Excelling in the enabling space

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CS1022: Learning in a Digital Environment is a core subject, within James Cook University's (JCU) Diploma of Higher Education (DHE). The DHE is a one year, open access, enabling program that attracts a diverse array of students from highly variable educational backgrounds. The DHE serves as a pathway into a variety of bachelors courses and students require a broad range of technology skills in order to succeed within their disciplines. CS1022 supports students in the development of the digital literacies required for success at university through explicit instruction, authentic assessment, and a flexible research-informed curriculum. The diverse student cohort's characteristic of enabling spaces results in variable levels of digital literacy in the classroom. In CS1022, inclusive teaching practices and principles of intentional design work in tandem to mediate incoming students' diverse levels of preparedness. This showcase demonstrates how JCU has responded to the challenges of digital literacy instruction in an open access enabling space through explication of the research methods, monitoring processes, and reflective design practices utlised in the CS1022 curriculum. The curriculum engages the Jisc (2017) digital literacies framework as an organizing device for the delivery of content on ICT proficiency, information, data and media literacies, and digital identity management. Following an initial roll-out of the subject in 2015, it became apparent that further investigation into the technological practices of students was necessary in order to inform the development of effective subject resources. The 2014 iteration of the Educause Students and IT survey (Dahlstrom & Bichsel, 2014) was subsequently selected as the analytic basis for an investigation of the digital practices of DHE students. Qualitative and quantitative survey findings, in conjunction with assessment outcomes, student feedback, and engagement analytics have since informed a series of curriculum refinements. These refinements include the integration of a diagnostic tool, flexible assessment options, career development learning, and the development of a simulated assessment task that utilises an adaptive eLearning platform to provide personalised formative feedback. The success of these approaches is evidenced in student satisfaction ratings that consistently exceed 90% and more broadly in the DHE's sector leading student achievement data.

References:

Dahlstrom, E., & Bichsel, J. (2014). *ECAR Study of Undergraduate Students and Information Technology, 2014*: *Research report*. Retrieved from http://www.educause.edu/ecar.
Jisc (2017). Digital capabilities: The 6 elements defined. Retrieved from http://repository.jisc.ac.uk/6611/1/JFL0066F_DIGIGAP_MOD_IND_FRAME.PDF