Developing Digital Practices and Identities: reflective questions

There will already be many examples of how students engage with digital practices within your current programme – from using learning materials in the digital learning environment, to electronically selecting and accessing literature, and writing, submitting and receiving feedback on essays. And there will be many more, diverse, digital practices related to your discipline, graduate employability or personal development and citizenship, that you could help your student to explore within your future programme. These questions may help you identify what digital practices you would like students to develop, and how to implement them:

1. What digital practices are important within your discipline – to employers, to students themselves or for empowerment in or improving society? Which of these are you excited about or most interested in?

2. Could one of these be included as learning objectives and module outcomes?

3. How can the development of this digital practice be included as part of an assessment?

4. Alternatively, can you offer students choice in what digital artefact (podcasts, infographics, animations, websites, interactive pdfs) they use to communicate and critique disciplinary knowledge?

For example, I might think it important that students understand the complexity and consequences of how they present themselves and their research or work online. I might generate a learning outcome ‘students create a blog on neuroanatomy of birdsong with a short biography’. The assessment might include understanding of topic area, effectiveness of blog-style, and appropriate content of biography. The assessment criteria around blog-style and biography content may be best produced by the class itself.
Recognising and sharing digital expertise through a shared language

Enabling students to see themselves as digitally literate, confident and able to learn new digital practices requires self-awareness and reflection and an ability to articulate this to others.

- Can you provide an opportunity for students to reflect on a meaningful digital practice they have developed?

Using terminology from either JISC’s learner’s profile and/or a profile they aspire to (such as JISC’s profiles) helps provide depth of description in a shared language. Furthermore, this may be co-ordinated with the Leicester Award, which all students are expected to engage with.

- How might the students share the digital expertise they are proud of with others and their wider community? E.g. digital credentials, social media, professional networking.
- Are there initiatives on your programme that encourage peer learning, recognition of expertise, or formation of student groups?