

# Design challenge: embedding skills creatively to engage the learner



Katharine Reedy, Jo Parker and Jane Secker



The Open  
University



Embedding open practices and digital literacies in higher education

- EDM122: Digital Literacies and Open Practice
- 15 credit module at City, University of London
- First taught October 2018
- Part of the Masters in Academic Practice
- Sign up to the course blog to join the webinars and discussions

- OU context and Learning Design approaches
- Frameworks and integration of skills, capabilities and attributes
- Activity
- Feedback and summary

# THE OPEN UNIVERSITY MODEL



- Open to all
- Large – 174,000 students
- 30% students under 25
- 76% students work full or part time
- Learning materials centrally designed
- One-to-one support
- Interactivity and feedback
- All modules have a VLE website





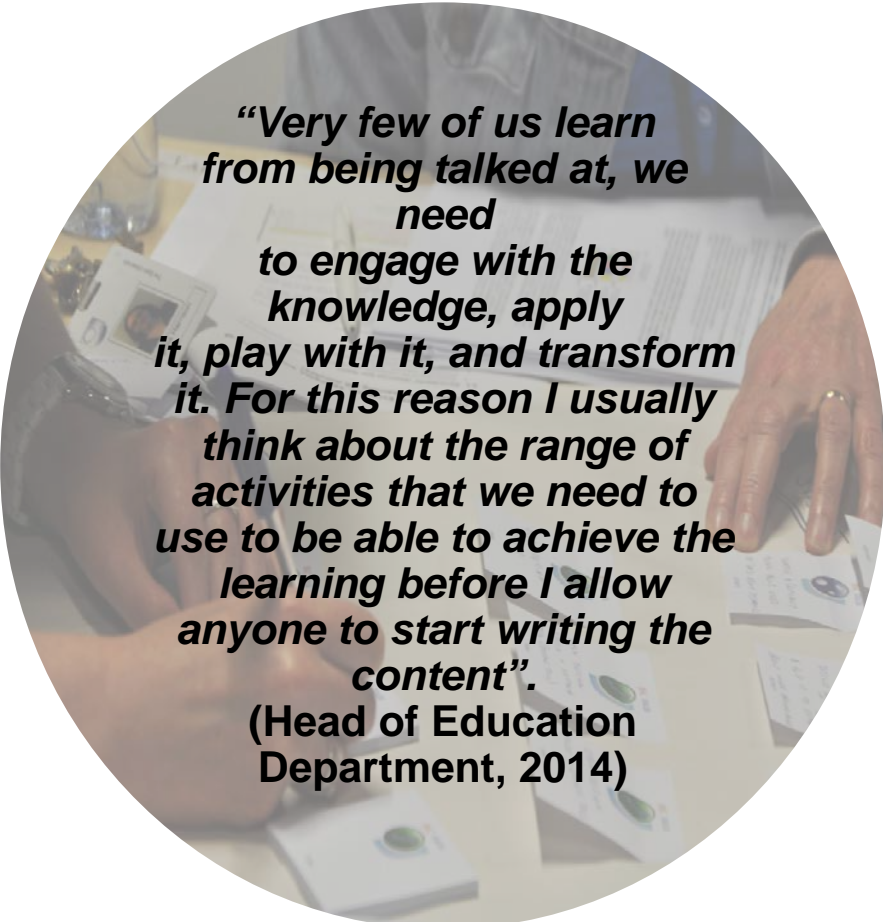
# LEARNING DESIGN AT THE OU

A structured approach to developing and evaluating curriculum, which puts the student learning journey at the heart of the design process.

About **designing for student engagement with learning tools, materials and communities**

**Two key purposes:**

- Module / qualification design
- Quality enhancement



*“Very few of us learn from being talked at, we need to engage with the knowledge, apply it, play with it, and transform it. For this reason I usually think about the range of activities that we need to use to be able to achieve the learning before I allow anyone to start writing the content”.*

**(Head of Education Department, 2014)**

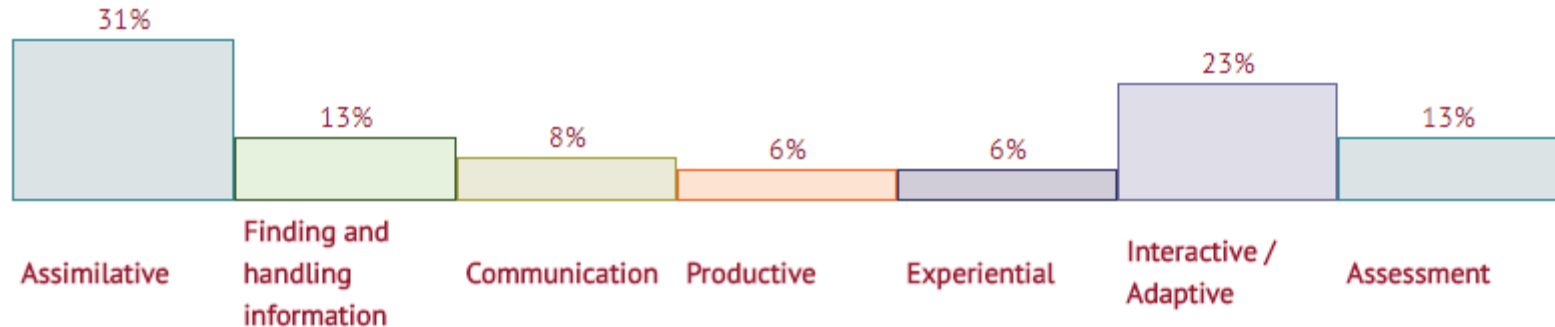
# SOME PRACTICAL LEARNING DESIGN APPROACHES THAT WE USE

- Developing a module vision
- Profiling the target learner(s)
- Ensuring that learning outcomes, teaching and learning activities and assessment are aligned
- Planning student activity and skills development
- Identifying design challenges

# KNOW YOUR LEARNERS: STUDENT PROFILES



# VISUALISING DESIGNS



- Focus on student experience and outcomes, and what the student will do to learn
- The OU Learning Design activity planner framework encourages teams to design for active student engagement; skills development is part of this



# LEARNING DESIGN WORKSHOPS

Creative,  
collaborative and  
consensus-driven  
approach



# HOW ARE WE SUPPORTING DEVELOPMENT OF SKILLS AND ATTRIBUTES?

- Helping curriculum teams to map the student journey
- Bringing in the student voice
- Encouraging articulation of skills – working in partnership with key stakeholders



# DIL FRAMEWORK

Home View all View by level View by skill Examples

Library Services > Digital Literacy Framework > View by level > Level 0

Level 0

Level 1

Level 2

Level 3

Masters

## Understand and engage in digital practices

### Examples >

- Distinguish between different categories of public users of the internet and the spaces in which they are likely to be encountered. In particular: other OU students, online friends and contacts, commercial interests, malicious users etc.
- Distinguish between functions, tools and sites for finding and recording information online: internet browsers, search engines, copy/paste and download functions, etc. Successfully follow instructions for locating downloading, storing and viewing an item.
- Distinguish between functions, tools and sites for creating and sharing information online, e.g. email, instant messaging, social media tools, graphics and photo sites, video, podcast and webcast sites. Successfully follow instructions for uploading an item.
- Demonstrate ability to access tools and sites that are required for OU study at this level (e.g. OU VLE tools and sites: module website, study planner, email, forums, Library, etc.).
- Distinguish between functions and uses of common mobile communication devices, e.g. phone calls, texting, messaging to individuals or groups, using smart phone, ipad, etc.
- Distinguish between instances of public (e.g. social networking sites) and private (e.g. email) online communication.

## Find information

- Distinguish between different types of information to be found on the internet using a search engine and between

# EMPLOYABILITY FRAMEWORK

- Encapsulates the core competencies, skills, behaviours and underlying values of OU students to help them in their personal and career development.
- Describes three development areas of skills and competencies, behaviours and values and maps them against the 'levels' of OU study.
- Is an expansion of the current Personal Development Planning (PDP) and CBI employability skills based approach

Core skills and competencies	Personal attributes and behaviours	External awareness
Problem solving	Initiative	Commercial and/or sector awareness
Communication	Self-management and resilience	Global citizenship
Collaboration	Self-awareness, including confidence and awareness of values	
Numeracy		
Digital Literacy		

# SKILLS MAPPING

A=Assessed  
T=Taught  
G=Guidance provided  
U=Used

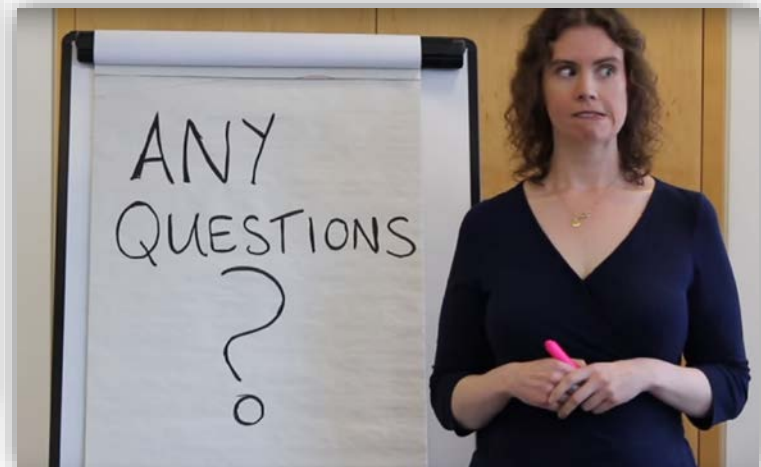
	Level 1 module	Level 1 module	Level 2 module	Level 3 module	Level 3 module
Understand and engage in digital practices	G	ATGU	U	G	GU
Find information	T	TU	TGU		ATGU
Critically evaluate information, online interactions and online tools	T				ATGU
Manage and communicate information	T	AG	ATGU	AU	ATGU
Collaborate and share digital content		ATGU			
Overall evaluation (green, amber or red)					



# HOW WE TEACH THE SKILLS

- Module-targeted:
  - Activity bank: for re-use and embedding in the VLE
  - Live online teaching via module website
- Standalone:
  - Live online teaching via Library website
  - Being digital
  - Facebook Q&As and live video

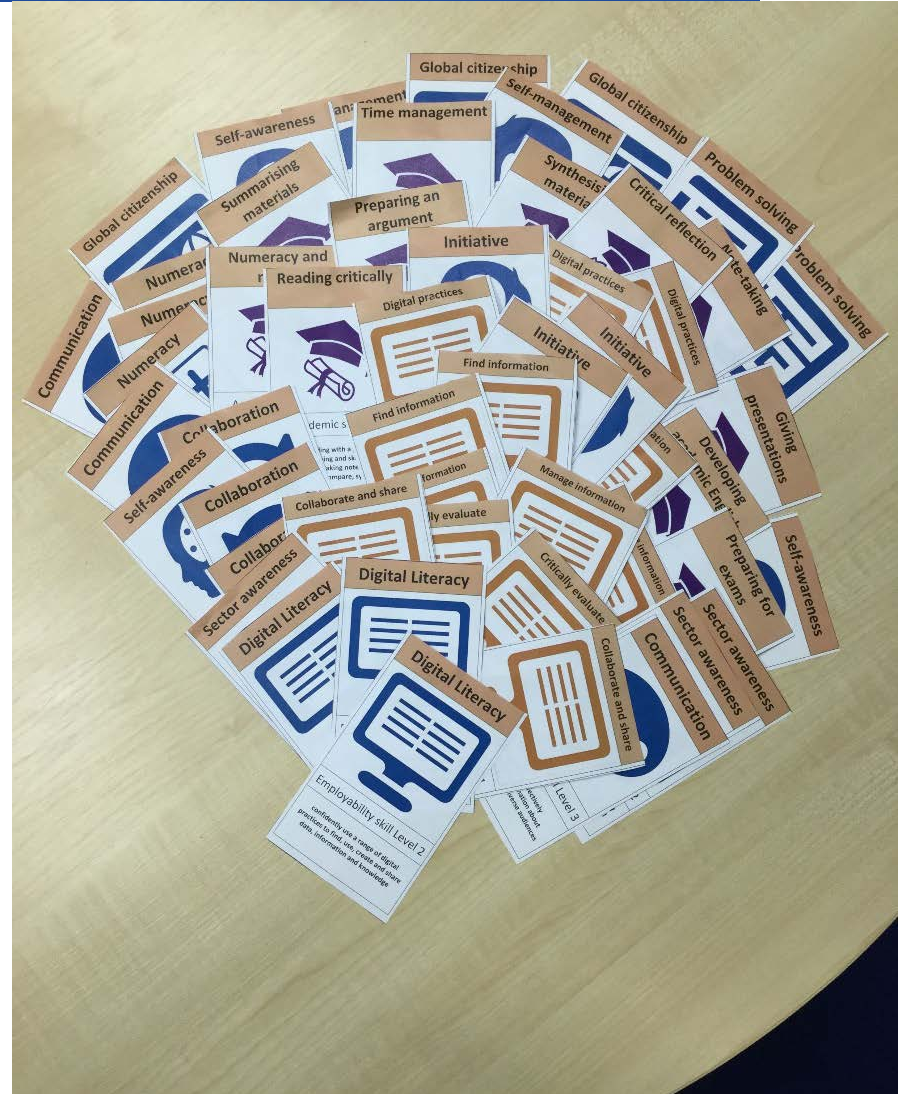
# STUDENT HUB LIVE AND FACEBOOK LIVE



<http://studenthublive.open.ac.uk/>

# CURRICULUM DESIGN: SKILLS CARDS

- Brings together employability, digital / information literacy and academic study skills, attributes and behaviours
- Based on Employability and DIL frameworks
- For use in workshops and meetings, to visualise development and progression of student skills



- Look at the student profile - note their career motivation, what degree qualification they are studying for and the level of study they are currently doing
- You have been assigned **one** generic employability skill or attribute that will be important for your student to develop as part of their qualification
- Using the skills cards, look at the statements for that employability skill / attribute at each level of study
- Focusing on the level of study your student is currently at, have a go at sketching out an activity to develop the employability skill/attribute. Think about:
  - What students will do – for example, it could involve communication, collaboration, finding and using information....
  - What digital literacy and academic study skills students will be developing and using - use the DIL and academic skills cards to guide you
  - What online resources you could integrate into your activity
- Use the paper provided to capture your design

- Share your activity designs with the whole group
- How might you use the OU Learning Design approaches in your own context?



# TOP TIPS FOR INTEGRATING DIGITAL AND INFORMATION LITERACY INTO THE CURRICULUM

- Partnership and collaboration between different stakeholders is key for a joined-up student-centred approach
- Frameworks can provide a shared understanding and starting point
- Examples really help
- Focus on what students will do to learn
- Embedding DIL and other skills into learning outcomes, assessment, and teaching and learning activities (constructive alignment) results in better student engagement

# LINKS AND FURTHER READING

Digital and information literacy framework (Creative Commons BY-NC-SA):

<http://www.open.ac.uk/libraryservices/subsites/dilframework>

Digital and information literacy facilitation cards (Creative Commons BY-NC-SA):

<http://jiscdesignstudio.pbworks.com/w/page/48915295/OULDI-Information%20Literacy%20facilitation%20cards>

Reedy, K. and Parker, J. (2018) 'Digital literacy unpacked'. Facet Publishing, London.

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# THANK YOU

## Any questions?



@joparkery

[jo.parker@open.ac.uk](mailto:jo.parker@open.ac.uk)



@kathr

[katharine.reedy@open.ac.uk](mailto:katharine.reedy@open.ac.uk)



@jsecker

[Jane.Secker@city.ac.uk](mailto:Jane.Secker@city.ac.uk)

[informationliteracy.org.uk](http://informationliteracy.org.uk)