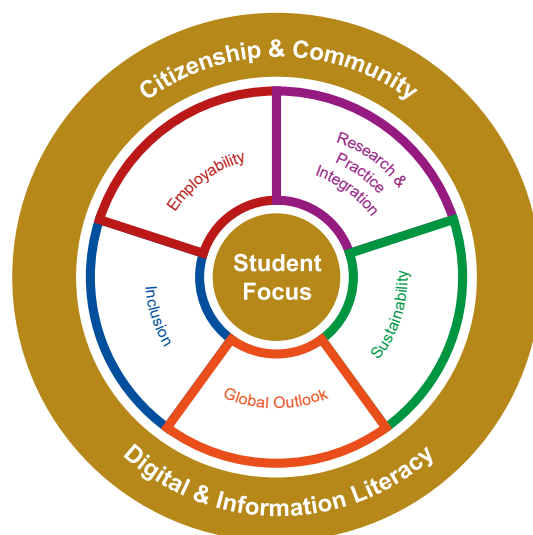# ENhance Quick Guides

Edinburgh Napier UNIVERSITY

Department of Learning & Teaching Enhancement

Theme: Digital & Information Literacy

Definition of Theme

Digital literacy and information literacy permeate all aspects of students' experiences of Higher Education, in addition to their future careers. They relate to awareness, skills, critical thinking, ethics and online citizenship. While many programmes will include aspects of information literacy within learning outcomes, it would be expected that all ENU graduates would have achieved various degrees of fluency in finding, interpreting, creating and presenting information. Additionally, this theme encompasses developing students' critical thinking about the consequences of their use and choices of digital technologies.

Why is the theme important in Learning & Teaching?

As we have seen in the second decade of the 21st century, online misinformation and manipulation have become weaponised for political and financial purposes[1]. Increasingly it will become more difficult to verify authenticity of information and sources as AI tools proliferate and content such as 'deep fakes' become widespread across all media. There is also an imperative for higher education to critically engage with the consequences of technological developments such as generative AI, and equip students with skills to use them discerningly and responsibly within their studies and the workplace. As

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1   See Preventing misinformation and disinformation in online filter bubbles - House of Commons Library (parliament.uk), Using misinformation as a political weapon: COVID-19 and Bolsonaro in Brazil | HKS Misinformation Review (harvard.edu) and Misinformation, disinformation, and fake news: lessons from an interdisciplinary, systematic literature review (tandfonline.com)

technologies develop, continuing adaptability towards new technologies will enable students to sustain lifelong learning. There is increasing evidence that we cannot make assumptions about our students' prior digital knowledge and skills, and for some students they will be getting to grips with some technologies along first the first time. Therefore, it is important that digital and information literacies are embedded within learning throughout the student journey.

Examples of Practice

In **MSc Physiotherapy**, Colin McLelland presented students with a choice of real-world advanced practice topics that lacked educational resources, instructing them to collaborate in peer groups to produce such resources. Student were tasked to work together to create an education digital tool, which comprised a component of their assessment. They could choose the format of the digital output and resulted in a variety of authentic artefacts, with an intended audience of carers, services users, the community and practitioners[2]. This example embeds digital and information literacy skills within the topic and in the task itself, thereby giving the students opportunities to develop their skills for both learning and the workplace.

For the **BSc Nursing (Singapore)**, Janyne Asfeth runs an online orientation to information literacy, supporting students throughout Asia to understand and compare global cultural, linguistic, and research informational practices from UK, Western-Europe, Singapore, Malaysia, Myanmar, India and other parts of Asia. By providing additional support and follow-up for non-attenders, student engagement can be monitored, and targeted digital literacy supporting offered. Additionally, a specific orientation is also held with the subject librarian which focuses on the information literacy for their studies in nursing.

In the **BA (Hons) International Festival & Event Management**, David Jarman and colleagues encourage students to engage with a wealth of online information through the lens of international sustainability. This includes government policy and strategy documents, case studies, and third sector organisations. With the latter, **Positive Impact** is one of the most prominent organisations in the events sector, and their resources have been incorporated into learning materials for students.

In the **PgDip Career Guidance and Development**, Susan Meldrum used work-based learning opportunities, including students taking part in live projects with the **Student Futures** team, enabling students to enhance their digital and information literacy in the workplace. Additionally, students participated in virtual work shadowing with a variety of employers, and blended or online work placements. These opportunities gave students real-world skills in digital communication and working.

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2   Further details: [Colin Programme lead - good practice example module.pptx (sharepoint.com)](sharepoint.com)

Prompt statements/questions

- How are you asking students to engage with a variety of technologies and develop their critical thinking and skills?

- How are students finding and using informational and digital resources and related skills within their studies?

- How are you demonstrating appropriate use of learning technologies which exemplifies both how to learn new tools and sound justification for their use?

- How are you allowing students to choose different digital modalities to present their learning both in-class formatively and in summative assessments?

- How are support and resources from **Library and information Services** and **Academic Skills** incorporated in your modules to support students in their studies?

- How are students being assessed for their use of informational and digital resources and related skills in modules across their programme of study?

Considering responses to these questions will help you see where digital and information literacy is embedded within modules and programmes helping you to evidence this ENhance them. This can also reveal where students may be development digital and information literacy within their study, where additional support may be needed to aid them in developing and demonstrating this in learning and through assessment, and where you want to embed greater emphasis on digital and information literacy within modules and/or programmes.