

Digital Excellence Impact Case Studies

2021/2022

Everything is Content

by Kaye Elling

Planning
Your
Module



Introducing
Your Module
to Students



Structuring
Your
Content



Design,
Collaboration
and
Construction
of Knowledge



Formative:
Putting Your
Learning into
Application



Designing Your
Summative
Assessment



Concluding
Your
Module





Kaye Elling

Senior Lecturer in Digital Arts
SCEDT
k.elling@tees.ac.uk

Kaye Elling, Senior Lecturer in Digital Arts, discovered a range of different challenges that came with Hybrid Learning. She needed to find a way to carry out video demonstrations that were accessible for a range of learners with differing needs and access to technology. The demonstrations needed to be engaging with a potential for re-purposing content, whilst also taking into consideration the Future Facing Learning aims.

She decided to develop one of her modules – Drawing for Games and Animation – as this module was almost all done manually with very little digital content or delivery. With this mode of delivery came a lot of challenges when lockdown came into effect, as one of the objectives for students is to ‘develop observational skills and understand the principles of drawing applied to the human figure and objects from life’ as well as to draw on location using traditional techniques. Clearly, this was a module that was going to struggle with online delivery.

Kaye worked through a few different ideas and modes of delivery and came up with a combination of them all that worked really effectively, using the benefits of all of the methods to create a great way to deliver content that students were happy with.

One of Kaye’s initial ideas included one of the most used ways of online delivery, using ReView to record lectures. She recorded her one hour lectures split up into two or three shorter videos, including in-video breaks for structured self reflection and task planning. She also added a timetabled lecture slot for the students to participate in a live Q&A session. The benefits of this was that there was a lot of content delivered, however, not a lot of students actually watched the videos and this mode of delivery was very time intensive.

Another of her ideas was to record demonstrations in the style of a Youtube video. These were short, informal demonstration videos recorded with her mobile phone, she set up her equipment at home and created up to ten videos per subject area in order to make these demonstrations as specific as possible. These videos were short and accessible and due to the format being something that many students are familiar with, they seemed to love this style of learning! This content was also reusable as the topics discussed could be applied to a range of different topics. However, again, for Kaye creating these videos was a very time intensive process. She also applied this Youtube-style video to art practice with a mix of short and long videos showing the application of different media in practice as well as the entire creation of an artwork with the medium from start to finish.



Kaye then thought about the popularity of social media such as Instagram and TikTok, where short video clips are the highlight of the platform. She created short ‘blip’ videos of existing content which were designed for advanced learners or those who needed broad information on a workflow. These videos again were popular with students due to the familiarity of the style that was being used and could also be a great way to market a course to a new audience. She then turned the blip videos into gifs, which can be re-used in the longer lectures, or made available for recruitment activities.



“

“To me digital excellence means having a plan for the format of your learning materials, so students with different access to technology can engage with learning the theory or practice in ways that suit them.”

Kaye Elling 2021

As a whole, the module with these new styles of teaching was positively received by students and Kaye was nominated for Outstanding Teaching in the Team Teesside Star Awards. Students left feedback such as “this module has been a great experience for me” and “like watching an online tutorial at home”. Kaye created a model of learning for students that included content in a range of different types:

Big – two hour long videos showing an entire creative process with talk-through commentary, one hour long pre recorded lecture videos broken up into manageable chunks.

Bite sized – content up to 12 minutes, shorted edited demos of applied practice. These are more practice or skills based modes of learning.

Blips – up to two minutes of time-lapse videos, no sound required.

As the size of the video decreases, so does the formality, but the accessibility of the video increases for students. It’s a great idea for your students to experience a range of different types of content, as this helps to keep them engaged and wanting to find out more about the topic.

The aim of the model was to mix size and formality of content to create a more diverse learning environment for the students. Content can and should be reused and repurposed for different audiences. It is okay to be less formal with students in certain contexts, and often they prefer this style of learning as they find that this is more relatable. Kaye encourages her colleagues to think about their content and how they can use it in different ways, with the motto ‘everything is content’, everything from online practical sessions to student work can be used in this way.

When Kaye was asked what digital excellence means to her, she said “To me digital excellence means having a plan for the format of your learning materials, so students with different access to technology can engage with learning the theory or practice in ways that suit them. It also means making your content flexible, scalable, and applicable across different modules at different levels. I like to think my drawing videos have encouraged my students to take creative risks and try something new, as well as being augmentative content for my colleagues' modules, or for recruitment and marketing.”

