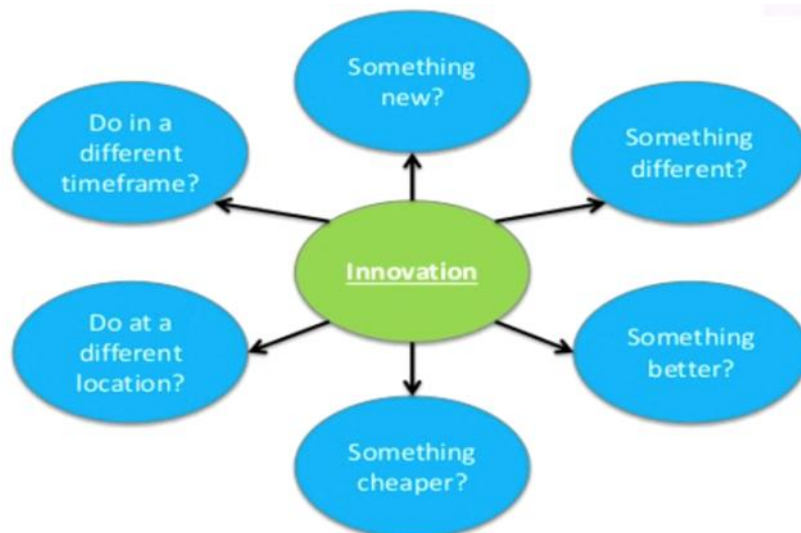


Assignment: Innovation & Research.

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- Module code: **ACCA5033**
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1. Introduction

Innovation is often associated with commercial technology, yet its social value becomes most meaningful when directed toward individuals experiencing displacement, uncertainty, and systemic exclusion. Refugees and migrants frequently arrive in unfamiliar environments where support systems are fragmented, information is inconsistent, and practical barriers—such as language, transport, documentation, and digital access—limit their ability to obtain essential help. In this context, computing is not merely a technical discipline; it becomes a mechanism for reducing friction, enhancing access, and supporting dignity, independence, and long-term integration.

This assignment focuses specifically on refugees and migrants, rather than treating disadvantaged groups as a single category. It examines how digital innovation can improve access to essential services and strengthen the support ecosystem surrounding newly arrived individuals. The discussion is organised across three assessment tasks. **Task 1** develops the project concept through a structured mind map, linking it to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, digital inclusion, and user-centred innovation. **Task 2** defines the project aim and objectives, justifies the research philosophy, and outlines the literature search strategy. **Task 3** evaluates research quality, sampling, ethics, pilot design, and analysis methods for a small-scale study that could inform a computing-based support solution.

Across all tasks, the central argument is that digital tools create meaningful value for refugees and migrants only when they are grounded in lived experience, cultural sensitivity, accessibility, and the wider social systems in which people seek help. As scholars such as Alam and Imran emphasise, digital inclusion is not simply about access to devices; it is about ensuring that technology genuinely supports social participation and reduces inequality. This assignment therefore positions digital innovation as a tool for empowerment rather than a substitute for human support.

2. Task 1 – Ideation and Mind Map

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INNOVATION FOR SUPPORTING REFUGEE & MIGRANTS

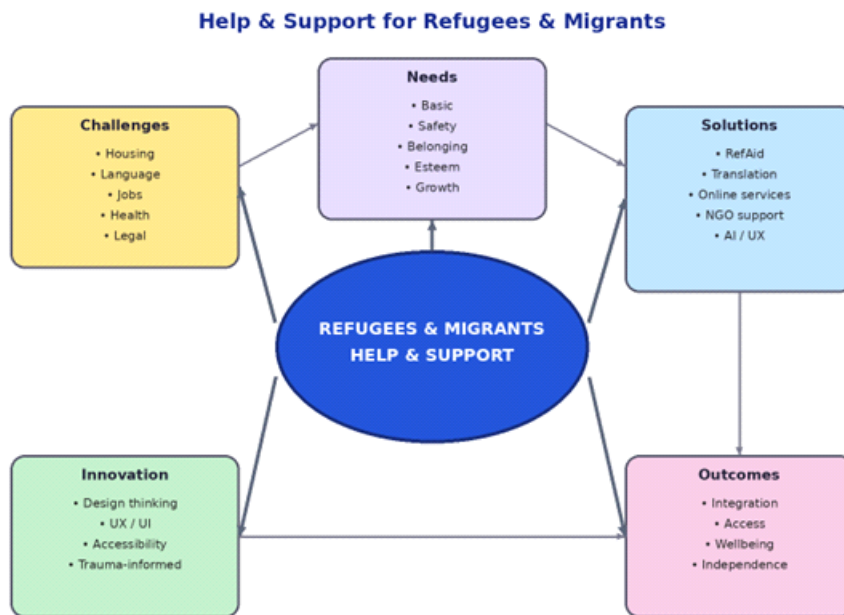
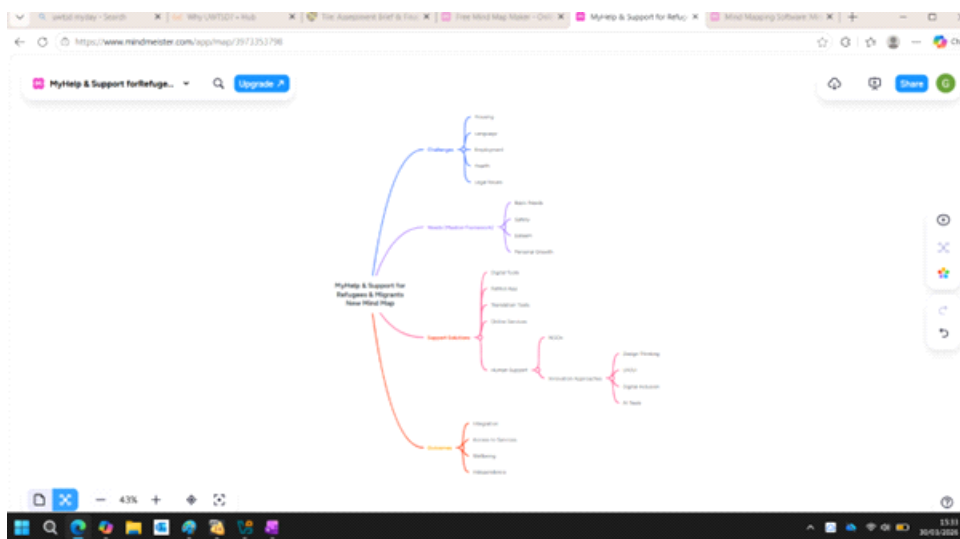
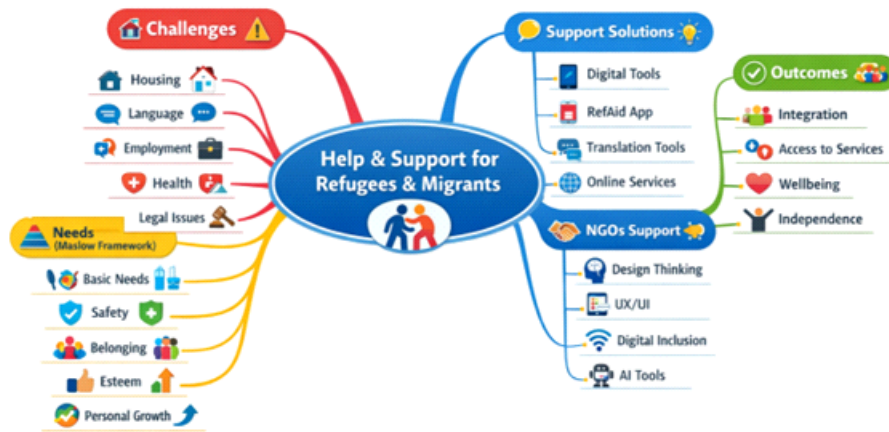


Figure 1. Linked mind map of key support factors, needs, solutions, and outcomes.



(<https://www.mindmeister.com/app/map/3973353798?t=ydNZdW5qvA>)



Title: Digital Innovation for Refugees and Migrants

This mind map presents an overview of the key factors involved in supporting refugees and migrants through digital innovation. The central idea focuses on how technology and structured support systems can improve their quality of life and integration into society.

2.1 Conceptual Overview

The central concept of the mind map—**Digital Innovation for Supporting Refugees and Migrants**—is highly appropriate because these groups often interact with multiple agencies simultaneously, including housing services, legal advisers, healthcare providers, education institutions, charities, and local authorities. The challenge is not only the scarcity of support but also the complexity of navigating what exists. Many services are available, yet vulnerable users may not know where they are located, whether they are trustworthy, what documents are required, or whether translation support is available. A computing-based project therefore has clear value because it can organise information, simplify navigation, and make support visible at the moment

it is needed.

[MyHelp & Support for Refugees & Migrants New Mind Map]

2.2 Needs Analysis Using Maslow's Hierarchy

The second branch of the mind map applies **Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs** to structure support priorities. While Maslow's model does not imply that needs always progress in a fixed sequence, it provides a useful analytical framework for understanding how digital innovation can support different levels of wellbeing.

Physiological Needs

Refugees and migrants require food, shelter, water, and hygiene. A digital platform can support these needs through location-aware maps, service directories, travel guidance, and translated instructions about emergency help. For example, a mobile service finder could display the nearest food bank, night shelter, walk-in clinic, or clothing bank, along with eligibility requirements and opening times.

Safety Needs

Safety includes legal security, reliable information, healthcare access, privacy, and protection from exploitation. Digital systems can support safety by providing verified guidance, appointment reminders, secure messaging with support workers, and clear signposting to

legal aid. Knight's work on trauma-informed practice highlights that support tools must be emotionally safe, predictable, and sensitive to users who may have experienced war, persecution, or instability.

Belonging, Esteem, and Self-Actualisation

Higher-level needs relate to community connection, confidence, skills development, and long-term personal growth. The mind map includes digital CV support, skills recognition guidance, online training, language learning pathways, and volunteering opportunities. These functions support autonomy, achievement, and social inclusion—key components of long-term integration.

2.3 Risks and Limitations

The mind map also includes a critical branch on risks. Digital innovation is not automatically inclusive. Van Dijk's work on the digital divide shows that inequality involves not only access to devices but also skills, motivation, and the ability to convert digital opportunities into real social benefit. A service app will not help individuals who lack smartphones, stable internet, literacy, or confidence. It may also exclude users who fear digital traces due to immigration concerns. Additionally, outdated information can mislead users, especially in emergencies. Therefore, technology should complement—not replace—human support.

2.4 Mind Map Summary (Inserted as requested)

This mind map shows how to support refugees and migrants by addressing their challenges, meeting their needs, and using innovative solutions.

- **Challenges:** housing, language barriers, employment, health issues, and legal problems.
- **Needs (Maslow):** basic needs, safety, belonging, esteem, and personal growth.
- **Support Solutions:** digital tools (apps, translation services, online platforms) and human support (NGOs).
- **Innovation Approaches:** UX/UI, AI, design thinking, digital inclusion.
- **Outcomes:** integration, access to services, wellbeing, and independence.

Overall, the mind map demonstrates that combining human support with digital innovation helps refugees overcome challenges and build independent, stable lives.

Task 1 References

- Ager, A. & Strang, A. (2008). *Understanding integration: A conceptual framework*. Journal of Refugee Studies, 21(2), 166–191.
- van Dijk, J. (2005). *The Deepening Divide: Inequality in the Information Society*. Sage.

3. Task 2 – Aim, Objectives, Research Philosophy and Search Strategy

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3.1 Project Aim

The aim of this project is to investigate how digital innovation—particularly mobile and web-based computing solutions—can improve access to essential support services for refugees and migrants. This aim is intentionally practical and analytical. It does not assume that technology is automatically beneficial; instead, it seeks to identify the conditions under which digital tools genuinely add value and the circumstances in which they may unintentionally reinforce exclusion. Framing the aim in this way strengthens the academic quality of the project because it encourages evaluation rather than simple advocacy.

3.2 Project Objectives

Five objectives support this aim:

- **Objective 1:** Analyse the main barriers refugees and migrants face when accessing support services such as housing advice, legal help, healthcare, language learning, and employment guidance.
- **Objective 2:** Evaluate existing digital support tools, including service directories, mobile apps, translation functions, online learning platforms, and communication systems.
- **Objective 3:** Identify the design features that make digital tools accessible for vulnerable users.
- **Objective 4:** Examine how user-centred and trauma-informed approaches can improve the quality and inclusivity of digital support.
- **Objective 5:** Propose the outline of a computing-based solution informed by evidence gathered through the research process.

Together, these objectives create a logical progression from understanding the problem, to evaluating existing responses, to developing an informed proposal.

3.3 Research Philosophy

The most suitable research philosophy for this project is **interpretivism**, supported by a **pragmatic orientation**.

Interpretivism

Interpretivism is appropriate because the project focuses on how people experience digital systems in real social contexts. As Creswell notes, qualitative inquiry is well suited to exploring meanings, perceptions, and lived realities. This is highly relevant because two individuals may interact with the same digital platform very differently depending on language proficiency, trauma history, confidence with technology, and familiarity with local institutions. An interpretivist stance therefore supports deep understanding of user experience, which is central to human-computer interaction and socially responsible innovation.

Pragmatism

A purely interpretivist approach may be too limited if the project aims to inform a practical computing solution. Pragmatism complements interpretivism by allowing the researcher to select methods based on the research question and the practical consequences of knowledge. This flexibility is valuable because both qualitative and quantitative insights matter.

Qualitative data can reveal why users distrust a platform or abandon a task, while quantitative data can show how common these patterns are. Pragmatism therefore strengthens the project by linking interpretation to solution development.

3.4 Search Strategy

A rigorous search strategy is essential for building a credible foundation. The search process should include:

- **Academic databases:** Google Scholar, IEEE Xplore, ACM Digital Library, ScienceDirect
- **Keywords:** “refugees digital inclusion”, “migrants technology access”, “service navigation apps”, “trauma-informed digital design”, “digital divide refugees”, “human-computer interaction vulnerable groups”
- **Boolean operators:** AND, OR, NOT to refine results
- **Inclusion criteria:** peer-reviewed articles, recent studies, relevance to digital support or migration
- **Exclusion criteria:** non-academic blogs, outdated sources, unrelated technical papers

Critically, the quality of the search is not measured by the number of sources but by how well they illuminate the topic from different angles. For example:

- A computing article may describe technical features but ignore cultural appropriateness.
- A migration studies article may explain structural barriers but overlook usability or interface design.

A strong assignment synthesises these perspectives rather than listing them. Ager and Strang’s integration framework is particularly useful because it highlights how housing, health, education, work, social connection, and rights are interconnected — aligning closely with the idea that digital support must be holistic rather than narrow.

3.5 Summary of Task 2

Task 2 establishes a strong academic foundation. The aim is focused, the objectives are logically structured, the philosophical approach matches the human-centred nature of the topic, and the search strategy is rigorous. Most importantly, the research design reflects a critical stance: digital innovation should be judged by the real value it creates for refugees and migrants, not by technical novelty alone

Task 2 References

- Creswell, J. (2014). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. Sage.
- Saunders, M., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A. (2019). *Research Methods for Business Students*. Pearson

Task 3 – Research Strategy, Ethics, Pilot Tool and Analysis

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4.1 Research Strategy

Task 3 outlines how the project can be researched in a methodologically sound and ethically responsible way. Because the aim is to understand both the lived experiences of refugees and migrants and the practical barriers they face when using digital tools, a **mixed-methods strategy** is the most appropriate approach. Mixed methods allow the project to combine the depth of qualitative insights with the breadth of quantitative patterns.

Qualitative Methods

Semi-structured interviews or small focus groups can explore personal experiences in detail. These methods help uncover why individuals struggle with digital systems, what they fear, what they trust, and how they navigate support services. Qualitative data is especially valuable for understanding emotional, cultural, and contextual factors that influence digital behaviour.

Quantitative Methods

Short surveys can identify common patterns in device access, digital confidence, language preferences, and service-use behaviours. Quantitative data helps show how widespread certain barriers are and which features users prioritise. Even simple descriptive statistics can provide meaningful insights for a Level 5 project.

Using both methods creates a richer, more reliable evidence base and supports the development of a computing solution that is grounded in real user needs rather than assumptions.

4.2 Validity, Reliability and Generalisability

These concepts must be discussed critically, not as abstract textbook definitions

Validity

Validity refers to whether the study genuinely captures the barriers refugees and migrants face. To improve validity:

- Questions must be aligned with the research objectives
- Language should be simple, clear, and culturally appropriate
- Tools should be piloted before full use
- Triangulation should be used (comparing interviews, surveys, and observations)

If the same issues appear across different forms of evidence, confidence in the findings increases.

Reliability

Reliability concerns consistency. In this project, reliability can be improved by:

- Using the same interview guide for all participants
- Keeping survey questions standardised
- Recording procedures clearly
- Ensuring data is stored and analysed systematically

Generalisability

Generalisability is naturally limited in small-scale research with vulnerable groups. A purposive sample may not represent all refugees and migrants. However, the goal of this project is not statistical prediction but **analytical insight**. Even a small sample can reveal recurring barriers such as:

- fear of sharing personal data
- difficulty understanding service jargon
- preference for audio or visual guidance
- low confidence with digital tools

These insights are transferable to design practice even if they are not statistically generalisable.

4.3 Ethical Considerations

Ethics are especially important because the target population may include individuals who have experienced trauma, legal uncertainty, discrimination, or displacement. Ethical research must prioritise safety, dignity, and trust.

Informed Consent

Consent must be meaningful, not just procedural. Participants should receive clear, translated information about:

- the purpose of the study
- what participation involves
- how data will be stored
- their right to withdraw at any time

Confidentiality and Anonymity

Identifying information must be minimised and stored securely. Personal details should be separated from response data. This is essential because participants may fear consequences related to immigration status or past experiences with authority.

Emotional Safety

Knight's work on trauma-informed practice highlights that research tools must be predictable, respectful, and sensitive. Questions should avoid triggering content and should allow participants to skip any item they find uncomfortable.

Ethical sensitivity is not optional — it directly affects whether participants feel safe enough to share honest experiences.

4.4 Pilot Tool

A pilot study strengthens the research before full data collection. A short pilot questionnaire can test clarity, accessibility, and cultural appropriateness. Example pilot questions include:

- How confident are you using a smartphone to find services?
- Have you used online information to look for housing, legal help, or healthcare?
- What difficulties do you face when using digital services?
- Which features would make support easier to access?

A small pilot (2–5 participants or support workers) can reveal:

- confusing wording

- culturally inappropriate assumptions
- missing response options
- accessibility issues (e.g., too much text, unclear icons)

Revising the tool after piloting improves validity and participant experience

4.5 Analysis Plan

The analysis must combine qualitative and quantitative techniques in a coherent way.

Qualitative Analysis – Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke) is suitable because it provides a structured yet flexible process for identifying patterns. Codes may include

- trust
- language barriers
- usability issues
- privacy concerns
- digital confidence
- preferred support methods

These codes can be grouped into broader themes such as:

- access barriers
- design requirements
- digital value creation

Quantitative Analysis – Descriptive Statistics

For a Level 5 project, descriptive statistics are sufficient:

- frequencies
- percentages
- cross-tabulations

These can show, for example:

- whether low digital confidence correlates with preference for human support
- whether recent arrivals report different needs than long-settled migrants

4.6 Summary of Task 3

Task 3 demonstrates that a credible project on digital support for refugees and migrants requires:

- careful method selection
- realistic claims
- ethical sensitivity
- piloting
- a coherent analysis plan

These elements strengthen the academic quality of the assignment and show how research can inform responsible, evidence-based digital innovation.

Task 3 References

- Braun, V. & Clarke, V. (2006). *Using thematic analysis in psychology*. Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3(2), 77–101.
- Knight, C. (2017). *Trauma-informed practice in social work*. Social Work, 62(2), 123–130

5. Conclusion

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Digital innovation has the potential to make a meaningful and lasting contribution to the lives of refugees and migrants when it is designed around real barriers, lived experience, and the social systems people must navigate. The strongest solutions are those that combine practical service navigation with attention to trust, language, privacy, trauma, and long term inclusion. Through the mind map, this assignment demonstrated how Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs can be used to structure support priorities from basic survival to self-development. Through the project aim, objectives, philosophy, and search strategy, it established a rigorous academic foundation that avoids superficial assumptions about technology. Through the discussion of methods and ethics, it showed that responsible innovation depends on understanding user experience and recognising the limits of digital tools.

Overall, the argument presented is not that technology can replace human support, but that well designed computing solutions can strengthen access, coordination, and autonomy when they are developed with refugees and migrants rather than simply for them. Digital innovation becomes most valuable when it enhances dignity, reduces friction, and supports long term integration into society.

6. References

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- [1] K. Alam and S. Imran, "The digital divide and social inclusion among refugee migrants," *Information Technology & People*, vol. 28, no. 2, pp. 344–365, 2015. [2] S. Gifford and R. Wilding, "Digital belonging and cultural engagement," *Journal of Refugee Studies*, vol. 26, no. 3, pp. 389–405, 2013. [3] C. Knight, "Trauma-informed practice in social work," *Social Work*, vol. 62, no. 2, pp. 123–130, 2017. [4] V. Braun and V. Clarke, "Using thematic analysis in psychology," *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, vol. 3, no. 2, pp. 77–101, 2006. [5] T. Brown, *Change by Design*. New York, NY, USA: HarperCollins, 2009. [6] J. W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 4th ed. London, U.K.: Sage, 2014. [7] M. Saunders, P. Lewis, and A. Thornhill, *Research Methods for Business Students*, 8th ed. Harlow, U.K.: Pearson, 2019. [8] J. Tidd and J. Bessant, *Managing Innovation: Integrating Technological, Market and Organizational Change*, 7th ed. Hoboken, NJ, USA: Wiley, 2021. [9] J. Preece, Y. Rogers, and H. Sharp, *Interaction Design: Beyond Human-Computer Interaction*, 5th ed. Hoboken, NJ, USA: Wiley, 2019. [10] D. Norman, *The Design of Everyday Things*, revised and expanded ed. New York, NY, USA: Basic Books, 2013. [11] J. A. G. M. van Dijk, *The Deepening Divide: Inequality in the Information Society*. Thousand Oaks, CA, USA: Sage, 2005. [12] A. Ager and A. Strang, "Understanding integration: A conceptual framework," *Journal of Refugee Studies*, vol. 21, no. 2, pp. 166–191, 2008.