

Component 2 - Research Report

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Digital Skills and Research Methods.

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Introduction

As part of this research, you will find a report has been created based on students at UWTSD, the importance of technology, digital skills to complete assignment and collaborate. This report has been compiled by Tahrah Suffi, Sara Botfield, Jodie Thomas, and Emma Bench.

Currently technology is improving the way we communicate, work, shop and research has advanced with the help of laptops, smartphones, satellite navigation and emails It brings us closer and advances our communication by sending messages in an instance. This research has been conducted to gather a better understanding if there are any problems behind certain types of collaborations not being used.

Is more training required? Identify areas of support, to understand individual differences e.g Disabilities to be able to suit all individual needs Is there one preferred tool over another?

Collaboration is especially important in order to complete assignments, to keep updated with lecturers, students and different sectors of the university to be able to communicate and share information individually and share group work. to receive information daily on our Hwb app of what is happening at UWTSD i.e.: Workshops, online classes when people cannot meet face to face e.g covid, communication can still take place, travel, and trips.

(Scottish Government 2015) Identifying the relationship between students and activities using various digital tools, the outcome and impact it has on the individuals who can use the tools and what can be done to improve or develop.

The awareness of which digital tools were available to the students to collaborate and the difficulties students had come across accessing or lacking training and confidence which may have made them feel de-motivated or overwhelmed some may not be aware the tools exist and how to access them.

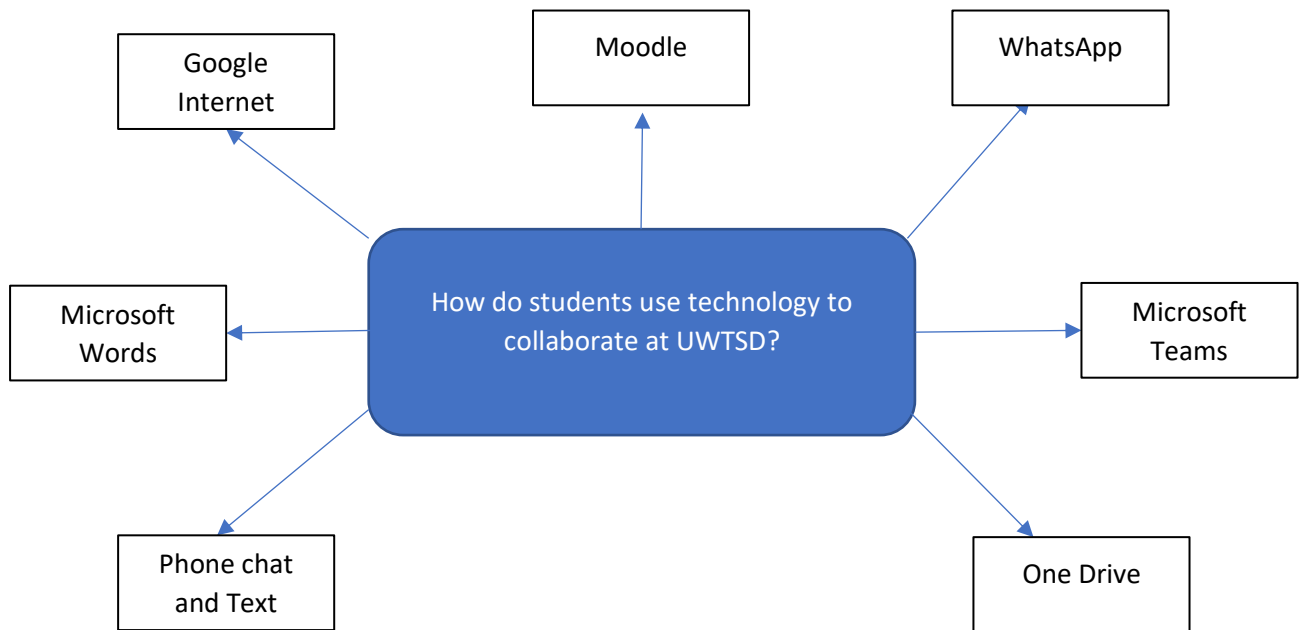
Digital collaboration allows students to quickly communicate and gather information to complete a research plan, digital skills are highly appropriate.

Students who struggle with understanding and lack training may drop out of the course which will come in the way of students reaching there full potential.

Research Question : 2.1

How do students use technology to collaborate at UWTSD?

6 key elements were looked at:



The Moodle which allows us to access our lessons in advance to prepare for the completion of assignments for each term. The library to carry out research.

MS Words: Create our work and assignments.

MS Teams: Collaborate for online class with the lecturer and students.

WhatsApp: Share work and messages

Internet: Google and research to find information from various sources.

One drive: Save and look at work

Method 2.2

I chose to look at this to gather information to understand which type of collaboration is preferred amongst individuals at UWTSD. This topic personally appealed to me as I have struggles and require additional training to develop my skills with digital communication, (UCISA, 2017) Some students may feel incompetent and confused with tools like computers and software literacies.

Knowledge is designed through social and textual practices, these practices help us to develop, to reflect through these practices is relevant as it creates awareness in our present

and future profession and development.

(Nils el Birkeland), to develop awareness to what digital tools are available and the training one would require operating these tools is essential to all students at UWTSD.

Primary and secondary research was looked at from the past and present (Bennett et al, 2015) research was carried out by several professionals within the digital and educational sectors (librarians learning technologists educational developer's teachers and researchers) highlighted how terminology around digital and information could be misunderstood. In order to support students effectively he highlighted the staff will need awareness of their own background knowledge based on what they are teaching, as lack of understanding can lead to frustration and failure.

Qualitative and Quantitative data was created to form our findings.

"The focus is on research that can be measured by data". (Cresswell, 2014).

Research was gathered from primary sources for quantitative based on surveys, statistical analysis and experiments. As part of the research that has been conducted a research questionnaire asking 15 questions had been accumulated. 12 of which are closed questions, 1 ranking and finally 2 likert questions have been circulated via WhatsApp and handed onsite at UWTSD. This was the chosen method as this would give us a reliable comparison to see if the conclusion stands.

Ethical consideration 2.3

You will find in the research it was made sure it was conducted and carried out in a way that completely avoided any harm to any individual or discrimination of age, sex, race, religion, gender and disabilities.

Great care for the accountability, principles, integrity and values were considered.

The questionnaire was completely voluntary, any individuals had the right to withdraw at any time and no personal details were recorded. The way the questions have been structured they have been governed by the University policy.

The result of my work has assured that there is confidentiality throughout.

Saunders et al (2019).

Results

Are you a student at UWTSD?		What is your gender?		Do you consider yourself to have a disability?	
Yes	15	Male	12	Yes	3
No	2	Female	5	No	14
Age range?	18-26	5	Do you feel confident using tools to collaborate?		
	26-34	5	Sometimes	6	
	34-42	6	Maybe	0	
	42>	1	Often	3	
			Always	6	
			Never	0	
			Very Often	2	
			Seldom	0	
When collaborating with others do you use one digital tool more than others?		Do you use WhatsApp more than other digital tools when collaborating?		Do you use MS Teams more than other digital tools to collaborate?	
Yes	14	Yes	13	Yes	6
No	3	No	4	No	11
Do you use One Drive more than other digital tools?		Do you use MS Word more than other digital tools?		Do you use Moodle more than other tools to collaborate?	

Yes	8	Yes	12	Yes	12
No	9	No	5	No	5
How do you feel about using technology to collaborate?		Which tool do you use the most?		I actively avoid using technology?	
Average 4stars		MS Teams	4	Strongly Agree	8,3%
		WhatsApp	8	Agree	16.7%
		One Drive	1	Neither	25%
		Ms Words	0	Disagree	41.7%
		Moodle	4	Strongly Disagree	8.3%
I feel like I need more training?					
Strongly Agree	23.1%				
Agree	30.8%				
Neither	38.5%				
Disagree	7.7%				

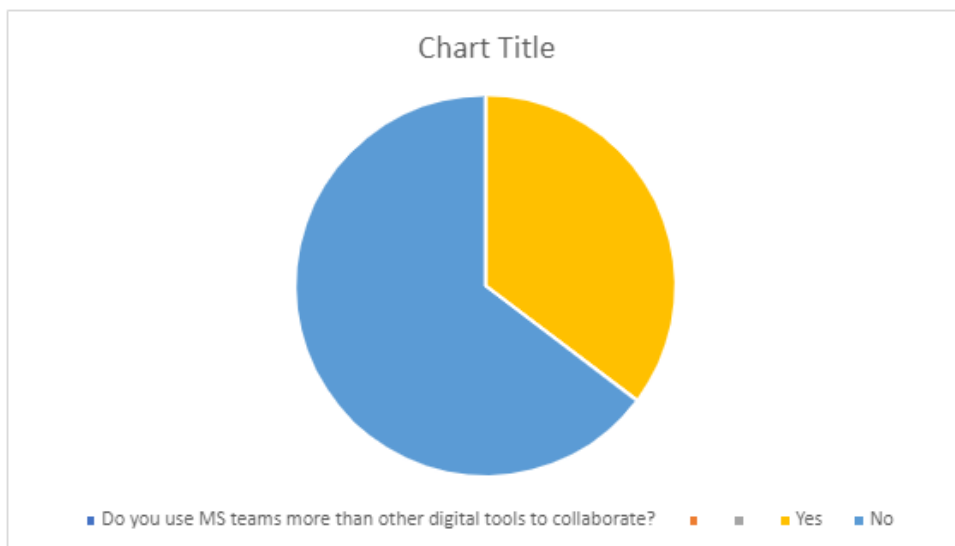
Age range?

18-26	5
26-34	5
34-42	6
42+	1



Do you use MS teams more than other digital tools to collaborate?

Yes	6
No	11



Do you use Moodle more than other digital tools to collaborate?

Yes 12

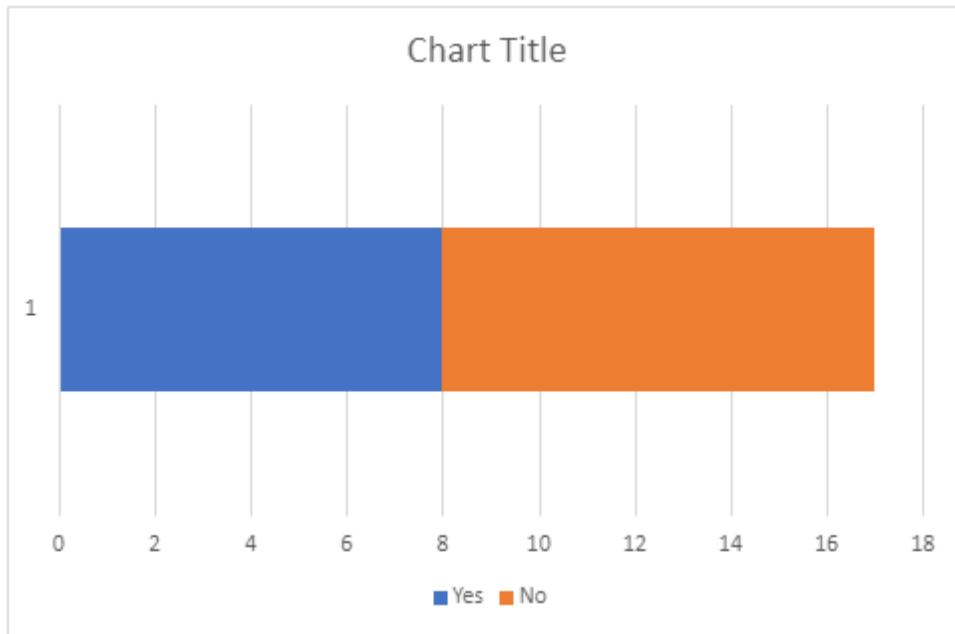
No 5



Do you use MS words more than other digital tools

Yes 8

No 9



Discussion

The research was combined with 15 students at UWTSD and 2 members of staff. The result is from 12 females and 5 males. This Questionnaire was circulated out on a weekday at a very quiet time when there were more females on sight maybe if it was handed out on a different day or to the same scale of males and females our finding maybe different. The questionnaire was answered mostly by 18-42. According to the research the younger students were more confident than the older students and individuals are aware of the importance of digital tools and its lifelong requirement.

Most students felt confident sometimes and always this will enable them to complete assignments, tasks and progress further, the minority of students will need to seek further training from staff and other sources.

If this questionnaire was to be retaken maybe it should have asked, what are you studying at UWTSD?. Maybe it should have been designed for undergraduates and individuals from higher education participate by having this information there could be a discussion how students studying different courses and from different levels feel about the confidence and knowledge they had before they enrolled at UWTSD, also it may be a great suggestion to have students to familiarise themselves and have enough background knowledge of the digital platforms and tools before they begin the course.

Students used one digital tool more than another this practice will need to be modified, depending on the tool e.g WhatsApp for sharing images and messages. Moodle for information from the university, the rest of the tools are important to gather your findings and collating them. Moodle would be the engine, google is for your research MS teams for meetings and virtual class One drive to save documents or collaborate on content. It does not mean having confidence in one tool more than another will be beneficial the rest of the

tools cannot be ignored they will also be required to complete and submit your work being confident on one tool and not on the others can cause a setback.

One must be flexible to obtain training as no one can predict how technology will develop, there is evidence digital technology will play an enormous role to facilitate collaborative learning. Digital education was not a short-term solution during the pandemic. Teachers and staff will need to update their knowledge and skills in order to meet the needs of modern students' availability to attend courses to improve or enhance their digital awareness to teach and pass on the skills required.

Conclusion

Ultimately collaboration is essential at workplace, schools university and hospitals, it helps one another work together as a team.

(Henry Ford 2022) "Coming together is a beginning; staying together is a progress; working together is a success".

Does everyone know how to collaborate?

To resume flexibility as no one knows how technology will develop none the less there is evidence that digital technology will play an enormous role to facilitate collaborative learning. The training for using digital tools will be required from a young age to progress and grasp these skills and develop for individuals and students for studies and professionalism. As new tools will be invented further training will also be required.

After reviewing statistics, we concluded that only 1 person out of 12 was very confident very often. There are a lot of students using various tools to collaborate. The leading one was WhatsApp this could well be due to the service being free of charge and saves the university and the user money.

It was obvious after the research there is uncertainty amongst the way students feel towards using certain tools, this could be the need for more training in certain areas, or lack of confidence in their abilities.

Moodle and WhatsApp were the most used tools to collaborate. Only 8.3% of people suggested that they do not require training most of the individuals do need further assistance developing their understanding and skill's when it comes to using collaborating tools. Digital collaboration has great importance and amazing benefits Deloitte (2013) conducted a survey about digital collaboration tools many years ago and it revealed globalisation had increased as businesses had cut down staff face to face, instead they were bringing the best of minds together globally. The future is digital one without the other will hinder the objective.

(Bryson 2016) Although IT will play a significant role in digital transformation the responsibility of implementing and adapting to changes with digital tools falls to everyone

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