

Assessment 1: E-Portfolio

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Component 1: Development of Academic Skills

1.1 Evaluating Academic Sources Using the CRAAP Test

Source 1

Smith, E. E., Kahlke, R. and Judd, R. (2020) 'Not just digital natives: Integrating technologies in professional education contexts', *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology*. This source was found on the journal's official website.

Using the CRAAP test, this source shows good Currency because it was published in 2020. Although it is not very recent, it is still relevant to digital learning in higher education. The Relevance is strong because the article looks at how university students use technology and challenges the idea that young people automatically have strong digital skills. This links directly to digital skills in higher education. The Authority is reliable because the authors are academic researchers and the article was published in a peer-reviewed journal. The Accuracy is supported by research evidence, references and a clear explanation of the findings. The Purpose is academic because the article examines how technology is used in

professional education rather than promoting a product or personal opinion.

Source 2

Surducan, E. M. and Valadas, S. T. (2025) 'The role of digital competences in the academic success of digital natives', *Journal of Digital Educational Technology*. This source was accessed through the journal website.

This article has strong Currency because it was published in 2025, making it very recent. The Relevance is high because it directly looks at digital skills and their connection with academic success in higher education. The Authority is credible because the authors are researchers and the article appears in a peer-reviewed academic journal. The Accuracy is clear because the study uses student survey data and explains the research methods. The Purpose is academic because the study aims to understand the connection between digital skills and student achievement rather than promote a particular viewpoint.

1.2 Synthesis of Academic Sources

Both sources look at digital skills in higher education, but they focus on different parts of the issue. Smith et al. (2020) show that being familiar with everyday technology does not automatically mean that students have the digital skills needed for academic work. Surducan and Valadas (2025) build on this by looking at the relationship between digital competence and academic achievement. Together, the two sources show that students should not be assumed to have strong academic digital skills simply because they use technology regularly. The sources therefore suggest that students need to develop digital skills specifically for academic purposes. These skills can be important when students are carrying out research, using online information and completing university tasks. Overall, both studies help show why digital competence is an important part of higher education.

1.3 Key Challenge and Opportunity

A key challenge in higher education is the gap between students' everyday use of technology and the digital skills needed for academic work. Smith et al. (2020) show that being familiar with everyday technology does not automatically give students the skills needed for academic tasks. This can make activities such as research and checking online information more difficult. However, there is also an opportunity because digital skills can be developed through practice and support. Surducan and Valadas (2025) found a relationship between digital competence and academic achievement, showing why developing these skills is important. Therefore, improving digital competence can help students use technology more effectively for their academic work.

1.4 Academic Planning

For Component 2, I will first focus on the main challenges students face when using digital

technology in higher education. I will then look at the opportunities that digital skills can provide for academic work. The report will focus on key academic skills such as critical evaluation, digital literacy and time management. I will use academic sources to support the discussion and connect the strategies to the challenges and opportunities identified. Component 2 will be structured into an introduction, challenges, opportunities, strategies for development and a conclusion.

Component 2: Application of Academic Skills

2.1 Introduction

Digital skills have become increasingly important in higher education because students use online learning platforms, academic databases and other digital systems as part of their studies. However, being familiar with everyday technology does not automatically mean that students have the digital skills needed for academic work. Understanding these challenges is important because students have different levels of digital competence and may therefore experience difficulties with some academic tasks. At the same time, digital technology provides opportunities to access learning materials and support academic work. This report will look at the main challenges students face when using digital technology, examine the opportunities that digital skills can provide and discuss three strategies that students can use to develop their skills and succeed in higher education.

2.2 Challenges for Students in the Digital Era

Students face several challenges when using technology in higher education. One challenge is the assumption that being familiar with everyday technology automatically means that students have strong academic digital skills. However, digital competence involves more than simply being able to use technology. Students need to know how to use digital resources effectively for academic purposes, including finding and using information. Zakir et al. (2025) found a relationship between digital literacy, digital competence and academic performance, showing the importance of developing these skills. Another challenge is that students do not all start university with the same level of digital competence. Some students may therefore find it more difficult to use online resources or manage digital learning activities. Surducan and Valadas (2025) also found a relationship between digital competence and academic achievement. This shows that differences in digital skills can affect how students manage their academic work. Developing digital literacy and critical evaluation skills can therefore help students deal with the demands of digital higher education.

2.3 Opportunities in the Digital Era

Digital technology also creates opportunities for students in higher education. One opportunity is easier access to academic information and learning materials. Online resources allow students to find information and use digital materials as part of their studies. Zakir et al. (2025) found that digital literacy is related to digital competence and academic performance, showing the potential benefits of developing these skills. Another

opportunity is using digital environments to support learning and organise academic activities. Digital competence can help students use technology more effectively as part of their studies. Surducan and Valadas (2025) also found a relationship between digital competence and academic achievement. However, these opportunities depend on students having the skills to use technology appropriately. Digital tools can be useful for academic work, but students also need to evaluate information carefully and use digital resources for the right purpose. Therefore, developing digital skills can help students make better use of the opportunities provided by technology.

2.4 How Students Can Adapt to Succeed

Students can use three main strategies to deal with the challenges of digital learning.

First, students should develop their critical evaluation skills when using online information. Students need to check whether information is credible and suitable for academic work instead of accepting everything they find online. This develops digital literacy and helps address the difference between everyday technology use and academic digital skills (Zakir et al., 2025).

Second, students should improve their digital organisation and time management. Keeping academic files organised, managing deadlines and using digital learning platforms effectively can help students manage their studies. This links digital skills with time management and can help students use the opportunities provided by digital learning more effectively.

Finally, students should continue developing their digital competence through practice and appropriate support. Students should not assume that their everyday technology skills are enough for university. Instead, they can identify areas where they need to improve and practise using digital tools for academic tasks. Zakir et al. (2025) found relationships between digital literacy, digital competence and academic performance, while Surducan and Valadas (2025) also found a relationship between digital competence and academic achievement. Together, these strategies can help students deal with digital challenges and use technology more effectively in higher education.

2.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, digital skills are an important part of higher education. One of the main challenges is that being familiar with everyday technology does not automatically mean that students have the digital skills needed for academic work. However, digital technology also provides opportunities to access learning resources and support academic activities. Students can respond to these challenges by developing critical evaluation skills, improving their digital organisation and time management, and continuing to develop their digital competence through practice and support. Research has found a relationship between digital competence and academic achievement, showing why developing these skills is important (Surducan and Valadas, 2025). Overall, students can adapt to the digital era more

effectively by developing the academic skills needed to use technology critically and appropriately.

References

Component 1

Smith, E.E., Kahlke, R. and Judd, R. (2020) 'Not just digital natives: Integrating technologies in professional education contexts', *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology*, 36(3). Available at: <https://ajet.org.au> (Accessed: 20 February 2026).

Surducun, E.M. and Valadas, S.T. (2025) 'The role of digital competences in the academic success of digital natives', *Journal of Digital Educational Technology*, 5(1). Available at: <https://www.jdet.org> (Accessed: 20 February 2026).

Component 2

Surducun, E.M. and Valadas, S.T. (2025) 'The role of digital competences in the academic success of digital natives', *Journal of Digital Educational Technology*, 5(1). Available at: <https://www.jdet.org> (Accessed: 20 February 2026).

Zakir, S., Hoque, M.E., Susanto, P., Nisaa, V., Alam, M.K., Khatimah, H. and Mulyani, E. (2025) 'Digital literacy and academic performance: the mediating roles of digital informal learning, self-efficacy, and students' digital competence', *Frontiers in Education*.

3.1 Academic Poster:



