

Evidence of Learning (E-Portfolio)



MODULE NAME: ACADEMIC SKILLS FOR THE DIGITAL ERA
BMSW4013

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Component 1 – Research and Planning

Source Exploration

Recent research “Measuring Students’ Use of Digital Technology to Support Their Studies”, written by Vesna Cancer, Polona Tomic and Maja Rozman and published in July 2025, is the chosen source for exploring the impact of digital tools on students’ learning. The article examines the different ways student use digital technology, drawing on research that highlights both the benefits of digital tools and the difficulties some students face depending on their individual abilities.

This source in an article that considers the digital era from a critical perspective and discusses the advantages and disadvantages of digital tools in education. As it is one of the most recent publications on this topic, it gives the confidence that it is researching the current context of students’ learning.

By outlining both the challenges and opportunities associated with digital technology, this article will help to answer the main question of the report. It also includes references to additional sources, which will allow me to explore further information about students and their development in the digital era.

Key Challenge for Students

The source highlights having a stable internet connection as one of the main challenges students face when using digital tools. Most online tools today require reliable internet access: browsing the information, participating in online discussions and communicating with peers all depend on being connected. When the connection is poor, students’ efficiency and time management are directly affected. For example, delayed responses in group chats can limit collaboration, and slow internet can reduce the time available to explore topics or submit assessments on time. From real experiences, an unstable connection creates unnecessary stress and prevents students from engaging fully with their learning skills.

Key Opportunity for Students

From students’ experiences, access to digital search tools- such as AI systems, online browsers and navigation options that allow users to locate specific words or phrases in a text – is one of the most valuable opportunities for students. Academic work often requires reading large amounts of material, conducting research and forming informed opinions. These tools help students work more efficiently, particularly those who struggle with concentration or read more slowly. The research finds that AI enables students to access a wide range of sources quickly and reduces the time spent searching for relevant information. Instead of reading an entire book, they can locate

key terms in an online version, which lowers stress and allows to focus more on understanding the subject rather than on time-consuming searching.

Planning My Report

This report provides equal attention to both opportunities and challenges. It has been showed by professionals that although digital tools have a lot of benefits, it may also affect students and their performance in today's educational performance. Research is paying attention to facts, rather than opinions, becoming an objective view about this report.

There are several digital tools available to students, however report will focus on planning and organisation tools, AI and online content, as these are supported by credible sources and students' real experiences.

Report has a straightforward structure: an introduction, followed by sections on the key challenge and the key opportunity, then three proposed solutions and finally a conclusion. It is planned to include any relevant statistics, that will support the main points of this report.

TASK	DEADLINE
Finish research	16/11/2025
Draft first section	15/11/2025
Complete first draft	16/11/2025
Final editing	19/11/2025

Component 2 – Answering the Question

Introduction

In today's world, digital tools are expanding and significantly impacting students. The digital era is pervasive, with higher education being one of the main areas where it is used. This report highlights both the benefits and the disadvantages of the digital tools for students.

Understanding the ethical use of digital tools such as AI and recognising the risks of over-reliance can improve educational performance (Al Shamsi, Al Hamami, Ali and ElSayary, 2025). Therefore, it is crucial for students to understand the challenges and opportunities presented by the digital era.

This report will explore one key challenge, one significant opportunity, and provide three practical suggestions on how students can adapt to thrive in the digital era.

Challenges Students Face

This report highlights unreliable internet access as major challenge for students. Another significant challenge is the distraction caused by social media. Social media and other communication platforms, used for networking and communication, can interfere with academic work for the need to stay connected with others (Martin, Long and Haywood, 2025). Students often check notifications from friends, or social groups during short breaks, or even while working on assignments. This interrupts concentration, as they continue thinking about conversations or feel an urgent need to reply. Non-academic content, such as entertainment, frequently diverts attention, reducing time spent on lectures, homework or assessments. This distraction can significantly affect students' focus, productivity and overall academic performance (Forsstrom, 2025). While this is the case, students often use social media platforms in their study. As an example, students on module of marketing, photography and video content creation have very little chance of avoiding these distractions.

Opportunities Digital Tools Provide

AI platforms can enhance students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills when used responsibly. In Component 1, it is noted that slow processing and reading difficulties affect ability to think critically, particularly under time pressure. For example, in the University of Wales Saint Trinity David module "Digital Skills," students are asked to analyse their digital capabilities using the JISC "Your Digital Capability Report." Although the report provides detailed information and guidance for improvement, some students initially found it difficult to think critically and assess my skills objectively.

Using ChatGPT to summarise the report and present the results more clearly proved very helpful. This enabled to recognise the strengths and, consequently, to identify strategies based on both students' strengths and weaknesses.

Research supports the potential of AI in developing advanced skills: "Features such as AI's ease of use, perceived usefulness, and learning value significantly contribute to the enhancement of advanced skills" (Zhou and Teng, 2024, pp.1302). Advanced skills include problem-solving, data analysis and critical thinking. Importantly, students should not use AI to complete their work for them; rather, it should be used as part of a dialogical framework. As one study notes, "With it, AI becomes a co-thinker, a reflective partner, and a medium through which students construct knowledge with depth, relevance, and agency." (Rena et al., 2025, pp.22).

How Students Can Adapt

1. Time management

Effective Time management is crucial, and digital tools can help. Mobile applications, online organisers, and mind maps allow students to plan their time efficiently, improving academic performance and self-organisation (Styslo et al., 2025) Popular tools such as Google Calendar, Asana and Trello enable task tracking, setting deadlines and note-taking. That also improves mental wellbeing as time is more under control. AI-based assistants can also monitor behaviour, detect unhealthy patterns, and provide personalised recommendations to support screen-time management and work-life balance (Krause, 2025).

Table 4 – Students' assessment of the effectiveness of implementing digital tools in developing time management skills (%)

Digital tool	Very effective	Effective	Moderately effective	Lowly effective	Not effective
Trello	45%	35%	15%	3%	2%
Todoist	40%	37%	18%	4%	1%
Google Calendar	55%	30%	12%	2%	1%
MindMeister	35%	33%	20%	8%	4%
RescueTime	48%	32%	15%	4%	1%
Clockify	42%	34%	18%	5%	1%
Asana	50%	31%	13%	4%	2%
Notion	47%	33%	14%	4%	2%

Source: (Styslo *et al.*, 2025)

2. Utilising Support Services

The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the shift to online learning, demonstrating the need for rapid adaptation. Digital tools and virtual platforms have become essential for education (Chinnins, et al., 2025). Students should use online courses, workshops, and university or library support services to stay updated on new programs and platforms. These resources enable students to develop digital skills and adapt efficiently to changes in the digital learning environment.

3. Improving Digital Literacy

Students must develop the ability to evaluate and use online sources effectively. Universities and online platforms offer training to cultivate comprehensive digital literacy, preparing students to succeed in the digital era (Yi, 2025). Students should explore the full range of technological features available to them to enhance their academic skills and use digital tools optimally (Cottrell, 2024). That proves the importance of digital literacy to improve academic skills and overcome challenges in digital era.

Conclusion

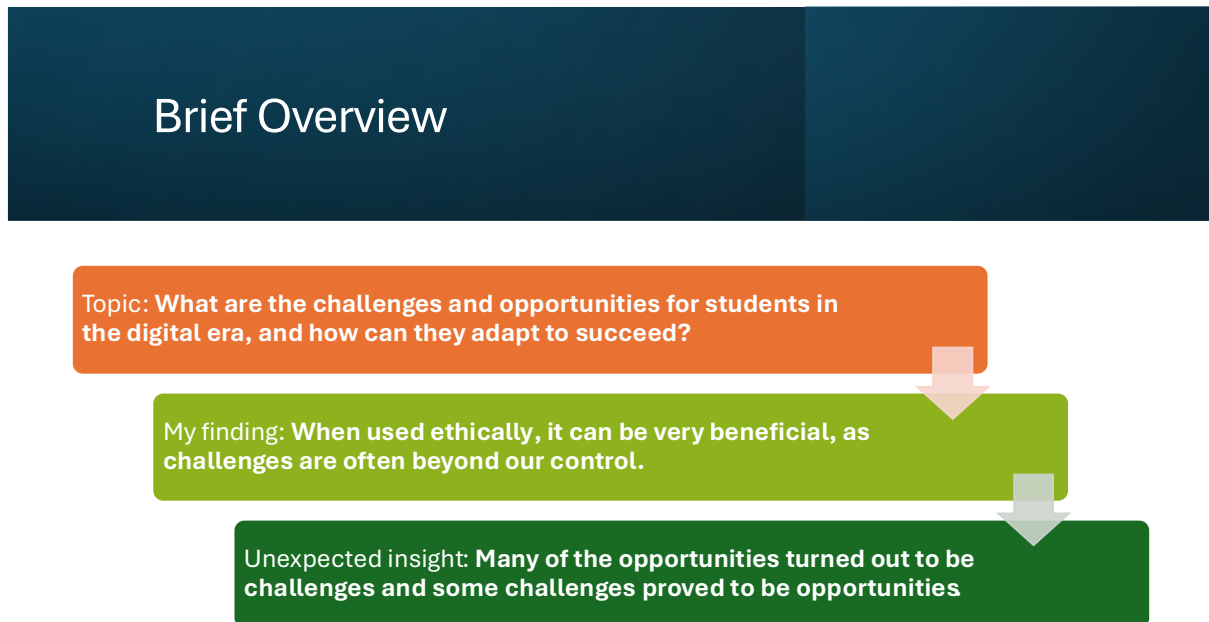
This report has shown that students face both challenges and opportunities in the digital era. Challenges such as unstable internet connections and social media distractions cannot always be avoided, but digital tools, including AI and online research platforms, offer significant opportunities to enhance learning and provide support to students facing challenges during their study such as time management or digital literacy.

If used ethically and responsibly, digital tools can play a major role in student success. Recommendations for adaptation include effective time management supported by online tools, engaging with workshops and courses, and improving digital literacy to maximise the benefits of technology. Overall, the report demonstrates that, despite challenges, students can thrive in the digital era by using digital tools strategically.

Component 3 – Reflective Presentation

Brief Overview

Slide 2 of the presentation



Reflecting on the Process

Slides 3-8 of the presentation



Planning and writing

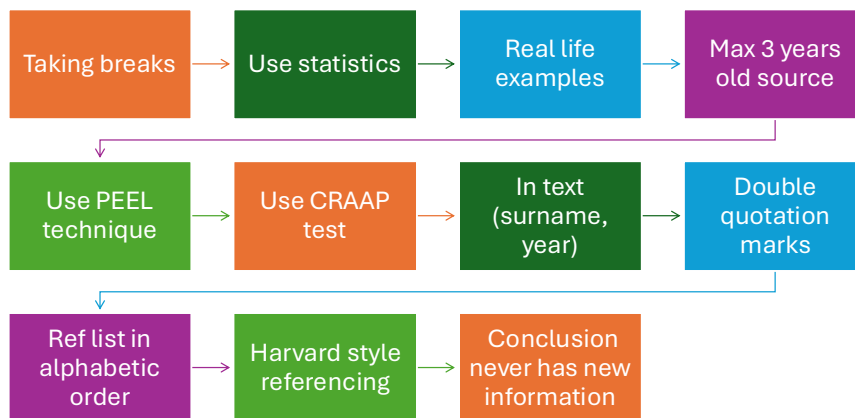
Key Tips Taken From The Lectures

Report Planner

Portfolio Template

Overcome Challenges

IMPORTANT TIPS



My report planner

1. Introduction

- Topic explanation
- Ref 2
- Outline of the report

2. Challenges

- My experience
- Ref 3 and 4
- Impact on students

3. Opportunities

- My experience
- Ref 5 and 6
- Impact on students

4. How to adapt

- 3 suggestions to adapt
- Ref 7,8,9 and 10

5. Conclusion

- Summary

Research

My Sources:

ChatGPT
Online Library
Physical Book

Opportunity:

Research Assistant

Challenge: Luck Of
Supportive Sources

New Perspective:

Not All Students Face
The Same Challenges
Or Opportunities

Challenges and Successes

Challenge: **Luck of sources**

Solution: **Taking breaks and being objective**

Successes: **Developing a clear report structure and not giving up**

Looking Forward

Slide 9 of the presentation

Looking Forward

Start

Start
research
earlier

Do

Pre-plan
academic
reports

Goal

Read more
quality
content

Reference List

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