

# **Certificate of Higher Education in Employability Skills**

**LEVEL 4**

**Academic Skills for the Digital Era  
(BMSW4013)**

**Resit/Rework Handbook 25/26  
Term 2**

**Academic Skills in the Digital Era**

|                |                |         |       |         |
|----------------|----------------|---------|-------|---------|
| <b>Student</b> | <b>Name:</b>   | Monica  | Alves | Nobrega |
| <b>Student</b> | <b>Number:</b> | 2523018 |       |         |
| <b>Module:</b> | (BMSW4013)     |         |       |         |

**Lecturer:** Ffion Cumberpatch – [f.cumberpatch@uwtsd.ac.uk](mailto:f.cumberpatch@uwtsd.ac.uk)

**Submission Date:** Assignment 1 Resit – 1<sup>st</sup> September 2026

Assignment 2 Re-sit 1st September 2026

## AI Acknowledgement

I acknowledge the use of Copilot for research and proofreading.

I confirm that I have not presented any AI generated text as my own work. I confirm I have copies of my drafts, notes, and other resources I used before, and after the use of AI tools which I may be asked to provide in evidence.

## Table of Contents

|                                                        |   |
|--------------------------------------------------------|---|
| AI Acknowledgement .....                               | 2 |
| Component 1: Development of Academic Skills.....       | 3 |
| Evaluating Academic Sources Using the CRAAP Test ..... | 3 |
| Synthesis of Academic Sources .....                    | 4 |
| Identifying a Key Challenge and Opportunity .....      | 5 |
| Academic Planning.....                                 | 6 |
| Reference List – Component 1 .....                     | 7 |

|                                                                                  |    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Component 2: Application of Academic Skills Application of Academic Skills ..... | 7  |
| Introduction.....                                                                | 8  |
| Digital Engagement as a Central Challenge .....                                  | 8  |
| Opportunities for Flexibility and Accessibility .....                            | 10 |
| Digital Literacy as a Foundation for Success .....                               | 11 |
| SelfRegulated Learning and Time Management.....                                  | 12 |
| Adapting to Succeed in the Digital Era.....                                      | 14 |
| Conclusion .....                                                                 | 14 |
| Reference List – Component 2.....                                                | 14 |
| Component 3: Academic Poster.....                                                | 15 |
| Title: How Digital Learning Supports Student Success.....                        | 16 |
| Reference List – Component 3 .....                                               | 16 |

## Component 1: Development of Academic Skills

### Evaluating Academic Sources Using the CRAAP Test

**Source 1: Henderson, Selwyn and Aston (2017)** This peer reviewed journal article was located through Google Scholar, linking to the *Australasian Journal of Educational*

*Technology*. Using the CRAAP Test, the currency of the article is appropriate; although published in 2017, its focus on students' digital learning practices remains relevant because digital engagement continues to be a central issue in higher education. The relevance is strong, as the study directly examines how students perceive and use digital tools, aligning closely with the portfolio's main question. The authority of the source is high: the authors are established scholars in digital education, and the journal is reputable and widely cited. In terms of accuracy, the article uses mixed methods research and provides transparent data analysis, enhancing reliability. The purpose is academic and analytical, aiming to understand student behaviour rather than promote specific technologies. Overall, this source demonstrates strong credibility and contributes valuable insight into digital learning.

**Full Reference:** Henderson, M., Selwyn, N. and Aston, R. (2017) 'What works and why? Student perceptions of "useful" digital technology in university teaching and learning', *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology*, 33(1), pp. 1–14.

**Source 2: Bond et al. (2021)** This article was accessed through the University Library Database (EBSCOhost) and published in *Computers & Education*, a leading journal in digital learning research. Using the CRAAP Test, the currency is excellent, as the article was published in 2021 and incorporates recent developments in digital learning, including post pandemic shifts. The relevance is clear because it synthesises global

evidence on student engagement in digital learning environments, directly supporting analysis of challenges and opportunities for students. The authority is strong: Bond and colleagues are recognised researchers, and the journal is highly respected. The accuracy is demonstrated through a systematic review methodology, which evaluates multiple studies and strengthens reliability. The purpose is academic and evaluative, aiming to understand how digital learning influences engagement and outcomes. This makes it a robust and credible source for higher education research.

**Full Reference:** Bond, M. et al. (2021) 'A systematic review of student engagement in digital learning environments', *Computers & Education*, 171, pp. 1–23.

## **Synthesis of Academic Sources**

A shared theme across Henderson et al. (2017) and Bond et al. (2021) is student engagement in digital learning environments. Henderson et al. (2017) highlight that students engage more effectively when digital tools are practical and directly support learning needs. In contrast, Bond et al. (2021) emphasise that engagement is shaped not only by tool usefulness but also by educational, helpful in providing knowledge, arguing that digital learning is most effective when educators integrate technology purposefully. The sources therefore complement each other: Henderson et al. (2017) provide insight into students' perceptions of digital tools, while Bond et al. (2021) offer

broader evidence showing that engagement depends on both technology and instructional strategy. Synthesising these perspectives strengthens understanding by demonstrating that effective digital learning requires a combination of meaningful technological support and thoughtful educational planning. Together, they present a more comprehensive view of how digital environments influence student success.

## **Identifying a Key Challenge and Opportunity**

A key challenge identified across both sources is sustaining meaningful student engagement in digital learning environments. Henderson et al. (2017) show that engagement decreases when digital tools feel unnecessary or poorly integrated. Bond et al. (2021) similarly argue that engagement declines when digital learning lacks clear educational structure. An important opportunity is the potential for digital technologies to enhance flexibility and accessibility. Henderson et al. (2017) note that students value tools that streamline learning, while Bond et al. (2021) demonstrate that well-designed digital environments can increase participation and improve learning outcomes. Together, the sources show that digital learning can empower students when implemented effectively.

# Academic Planning

Component 2 will prioritise the literature review and critical discussion sections, as these require the strongest academic analysis. Concepts such as digital engagement, digital literacy, and educational design introduced by Henderson et al. (2017) and Bond et al. (2021) will be developed further using additional academic sources. The report will follow a clear structure: introduction, thematic discussion of challenges and opportunities, critical analysis supported by evidence, and a conclusion. A timeline will be used to organise research, drafting, and editing to ensure clarity and coherence.

| Task`                | Date/ Deadline                              |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| Finish research      | 17 <sup>th</sup> to 24 <sup>th</sup> August |
| Draft first section  | 10 <sup>th</sup> to 13 <sup>th</sup> August |
| Complete first draft | 24 <sup>th</sup> August                     |
| Final editing        | 31 <sup>st</sup> August                     |

## Reference List – Component 1

*Henderson, M., Selwyn, N. and Aston, R. (2017) ‘What works and why? Student perceptions of “useful” digital technology in university teaching and learning’, Australasian Journal of Educational Technology, 33(1), pp. 1–14. Bond, M. et al. (2021) ‘A systematic review of student engagement in digital learning environments’, Computers & Education, 171, pp. 1–23. Kahu, E.R. and Nelson, K. (2018) ‘Student*

*engagement in the educational interface: Understanding the mechanisms of student success*, *Higher Education Research & Development*, 37(1), pp. 58–71. Martin, F. and Bolliger, D.U. (2018) 'Engagement matters: Student perceptions on the importance of engagement strategies in the online learning environment', *Online Learning*, 22(1), pp. 205–222. Ng, W. (2012) 'Can we teach digital natives' digital literacy?', *Computers & Education*, 59(3), pp. 1065–1078. Zimmerman, B.J. (2002) 'Becoming a self-regulated learner: An overview', *Theory into Practice*, 41(2), pp. 64–70.

## **Component 2: Application of Academic Skills**

# **Application of Academic Skills**

### **Introduction**

*The rapid expansion of digital technologies has transformed higher education, reshaping how students access information, engage with learning, and develop academic skills. As universities increasingly integrate digital platforms, online resources, and virtual learning environments, students must navigate both new opportunities and emerging challenges. This report critically examines how students can succeed in the digital era by analysing academic literature, evaluating key issues, and applying digital era concepts such as digital literacy, engagement, and self-regulated learning. Drawing on the sources evaluated in Component 1 Henderson et al. (2017) and Bond et al. (2021) as well as additional academic research, the report explores how students can adapt effectively to digital learning environments through strategic skill development and active engagement.*

## ***Digital Engagement as a Central Challenge***

*Digital engagement is widely recognised as one of the most significant challenges facing students in higher education. Henderson et al. (2017) found that students often encounter digital tools that feel poorly integrated or unnecessary, which can reduce motivation and limit meaningful participation. Their research highlights that engagement declines when technology is used for its own sake rather than to enhance learning. This aligns with broader concerns in digital educational technology alone does not guarantee effective learning, and students may disengage when digital platforms are confusing, overwhelming, or inconsistently used.*

*Bond et al. (2021) reinforce this challenge by demonstrating that digital engagement is influenced not only by the tools themselves but also by the quality of educational design. Their systematic review shows that students engage more deeply when digital learning environments are structured, purposeful, and interactive. Without clear guidance, students may struggle to manage online workloads, interpret digital instructions, or maintain motivation in self-directed tasks. This is particularly relevant in blended and fully online courses, where students must navigate multiple platforms, deadlines, and communication channels.*

*Other researchers echo these concerns. For example, Kahu and Nelson (2018) argue that engagement is shaped by a combination of institutional support, personal motivation, and learning environment design. When digital systems are fragmented or inconsistent, students may experience cognitive overload, reducing their ability to concentrate and participate effectively. Therefore, digital engagement is not simply a matter of using technology but of ensuring that digital learning environments are coherent, supportive, and aligned with students' needs.*

## ***Opportunities for Flexibility and Accessibility***

*Despite these challenges, the digital era offers significant opportunities for students. Henderson et al. (2017) highlight that students value digital tools that increase flexibility, allowing them to access materials at convenient times and locations. This flexibility supports diverse learning preferences and enables students to manage academic responsibilities alongside work, family, or personal commitments.*

*Bond et al. (2021) similarly emphasise that well-designed digital environments can enhance accessibility and participation. Digital platforms allow students to revisit recorded lectures, engage in asynchronous discussions, and access a wide range of online resources. This can be particularly beneficial for students with disabilities,*

*international students, or those who require additional time to process information.*

*Digital learning also supports personalised learning pathways, enabling students to progress at their own pace and focus on areas where they need further development.*

*Furthermore, digital technologies can foster collaboration and communication.*

*Tools such as Microsoft Teams, Zoom, and shared online documents allow students to work together remotely, participate in group projects, and engage with peers beyond the physical classroom. Research by Martin and Bolliger (2018) shows that interactive digital activities such as discussion forums, quizzes, and collaborative tasks can increase student satisfaction and promote deeper learning.*

*Thus, the digital era provides opportunities for students to take greater control of their learning, access diverse resources, and engage in flexible, inclusive educational experiences.*

## ***Digital Literacy as a Foundation for Success***

*To succeed in the digital era, students must develop strong digital literacy skills.*

*Digital literacy extends beyond basic technical ability; it includes evaluating online information, navigating digital platforms, communicating effectively online, and using technology strategically for learning. As universities increasingly rely on digital*

*systems, students who lack digital literacy may struggle to participate fully in academic activities.*

*Critical evaluation skills are particularly important. The CRAAP Test, applied in Component 1, demonstrates how students can assess the credibility of academic sources by examining currency, relevance, authority, accuracy, and purpose. In a digital environment where information is abundant, students must be able to distinguish between reliable academic research and low-quality or misleading content. This skill supports effective research, strengthens academic writing, and enhances critical thinking.*

*Digital literacy also includes understanding how to use learning management systems, online libraries, and communication tools. According to Ng (2012), students who develop digital literacy are better able to engage with online resources, participate in virtual learning activities, and manage digital workloads. This suggests that digital literacy is not optional but essential for academic success in modern higher education.*

## **Self-Regulated Learning and Time Management**

*Another key factor influencing student success in the digital era is self-regulated learning. Online and blended learning environments require students to take greater responsibility for managing their time, organising tasks, and maintaining motivation. Without the structure of regular face-to-face classes, students may find it difficult to stay on track.*

*Zimmerman (2002) defines self-regulated learning as the ability to plan, monitor, and evaluate one's learning. In digital contexts, this includes setting goals, managing deadlines across multiple platforms, and using digital tools to support organisation. For example, students may use calendars, task-management apps, or digital note-taking tools to structure their learning.*

*Bond et al. (2021) highlight that students who engage actively with digital environments by participating in discussions, completing interactive tasks, and seeking feedback tend to achieve better outcomes. This suggests that self-regulation is closely linked to engagement: students who manage their learning effectively are more likely to participate meaningfully in digital activities.*

*Developing self-regulated learning skills can therefore help students overcome digital challenges and take advantage of digital opportunities.*

## ***Adapting to Succeed in the Digital Era***

To succeed in the digital era, students must adopt strategies that enhance engagement, strengthen digital literacy, and support self-regulated learning. These strategies include Actively engaging with digital platforms, participating in discussions, and using interactive tools to deepen understanding. Developing digital literacy, including evaluating sources, navigating online systems, and communicating effectively. Using digital tools for organisation, such as calendars, reminders, and note-taking apps. Seeking support when needed, including digital skills workshops, academic support services, and peer collaboration. Approaching digital learning strategically, focusing on purposeful engagement rather than passive consumption. By adopting these strategies, students can navigate digital challenges and make full use of digital opportunities.

## ***Conclusion***

*The digital era presents both challenges and opportunities for students in higher education. While digital engagement can be difficult to sustain, and poorly integrated technologies may hinder learning, digital environments also offer flexibility, accessibility, and opportunities for collaboration. Success in the digital era requires students to develop strong digital literacy, engage actively with digital platforms, and apply self-regulated learning strategies. By doing so, students can adapt effectively to digital learning environments and achieve positive academic outcomes.*

## ***Reference List – Component 2***

*Bond, M. et al. (2021) 'A systematic review of student engagement in digital learning environments', Computers & Education, 171, pp. 1–23.*

*Henderson, M., Selwyn, N. and Aston, R. (2017) 'What works and why? Student perceptions of “useful” digital technology in university teaching and learning', Australasian Journal of Educational Technology, 33(1), pp. 1–14.*

*Kahu, E.R. and Nelson, K. (2018) 'Student engagement in the educational interface: Understanding the mechanisms of student success', Higher Education Research & Development, 37(1), pp. 58–71.*

*Martin, F. and Bolliger, D.U. (2018) 'Engagement matters: Student perceptions on the importance of engagement strategies in the online learning environment', Online Learning, 22(1), pp. 205–222.*

## Component 3: Academic Poster

**Title:** *How Digital Learning Supports Student Success*

**Summary:** Digital learning enhances student success by promoting engagement, flexibility, and self-regulated learning. Research by Henderson et al. (2017), Bond et al. (2021), Kahu and Nelson (2018), and Zimmerman (2002) demonstrates that effective digital environments depend on purposeful pedagogical design and meaningful technology integration. When students use digital tools that align with their learning needs, motivation and achievement increase. Educators play a vital role in designing inclusive, interactive, and supportive digital spaces that foster both academic and emotional engagement.

### Reference List – Component 3

*Henderson, M., Selwyn, N. and Aston, R. (2017) 'What works and why? Student perceptions of "useful" digital technology in university teaching and learning', Australasian Journal of Educational Technology, 33(1), pp. 1–14. Bond, M. et al. (2021) 'A systematic review of student engagement in digital learning environments', Computers & Education, 171, pp. 1–23. Kahu, E.R. and Nelson, K. (2018) 'Student engagement in the educational interface: Understanding the mechanisms of student*

success', *Higher Education Research & Development*, 37(1), pp. 58–71. Zimmerman, B.J. (2002) 'Becoming a self-regulated learner: An overview', *Theory into Practice*,

# Development of Academic Skills

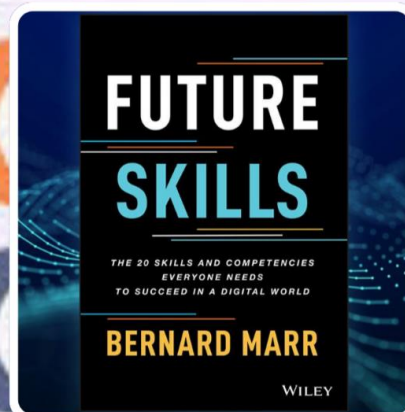
## Application of Academic Skills

*Adapting to Succeed in the Digital Era*

Adapting to Succeed in the Digital Era



Digital Learning Supports Student Success



# Dialogue for the Future

MY JOURNAL OF INSPIRATION

