

# Del 2012 Parallel Session 3

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Thurs 6 September



11:15 - 12:45



Stream 3A Room HH202

## 🗨 Developing a new model for distance-learning in an archives-rich discipline

**Gerry Leonidas**  
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This paper describes the challenges in the development of a new programme targeting distance learners in a domain where conventional literature is not easily available, and engagement with original artefacts is essential for the research skills.

### **Context**

Typeface design is a design field that has experienced considerable growth in the last decade. Central to this growth have been the strategy of OEM suppliers to support global markets without localising instances of their products, and the shift to region- or worldwide branding by major companies. The specialised skills required for high quality multi-script typefaces exclude autodidacts, and underline the need for structured education in multi-script typeface design. The University of Reading has pioneered teaching in this area through a very successful full-time residential MA programme in the Department of Typography & Graphic communication, whose graduates occupy dominant positions in the industry. The programme has inspired similar initiatives at postgraduate level, most notably in Argentina, Mexico, and Switzerland. Teaching relies heavily on the use of artefacts from the Department's Collections & Archives, and particularly the Non-Latin Collection. The Collection comprises around 10,000 drawings of letterforms, commercial correspondence, and material relating to the technology of typesetting non-Latin typefaces. The artefacts are unique and irreplaceable, and generally sensitive to repeated handling. Student work on the MA is split evenly between practical and academic work. The main academic output takes the form of a rigorous dissertation based on original research. The better examples are of publication quality, and contribute to the nascent scholarship in the field.

### **Objective and a Challenge**

Following market research in the field, we have identified a community of practitioners transitioning to teaching careers, and educators seeking to gain higher qualifications in a research-intensive environment. Unlike early-career designers, this community does not require practical skill building, but is characterised by a lack of engagement with the literature in the field, and a lack of understanding in specialist areas, most notably working with archival material, documenting artefact-based research, and integrating artefact-based research into practice. We have also identified a broader lack of academic writing skills. Seeking to capture this market, we designed a new MA programme, expanding the academic elements to occupy the full credit weighting, and strengthening particularly the research methods elements. However, our target community is international in location, and limited in mobility: professionals cannot interrupt their practice, and educators cannot easily take out a full twelve months. This represented significant challenges for three reasons: firstly, because the print literature in typeface design is not generally present in university libraries, even if these institutions run graphic design programmes. Secondly, because our methodology for building research skills is founded on intimate engagement with original artefacts. And, thirdly, because we place considerable expectations on group-based learning and peer engagement.

### **Programme Development**

In response to the limitations to student mobility, and the three challenges we identified, we developed a hybrid mode of study. Our model combines a part-time, distance-learning mode for the majority of the 24-month registration, with three full-time residential periods of two weeks each. The aim is to combine self-directed learning through guided study, discourse development through engagement with an online community of peers, face-to-face feedback on presentations and discussion, and hands-on experience with sensitive artefacts. The programme follows a three term per academic year structure. Students start the course in October of Year 1, with the first residential period towards the end of the first term (late November – early December). The second residential period takes place in the summer of the first year, at a time that coincides with the vacation period of most HEIs. The third residential period takes place in the autumn of Year 2. The programme currently recruits only one cohort every two years.

### **Online Presence**

We audited the literature we intended students to have access to, and identified only partial coverage by our institutional provision, especially for a worldwide cohort. We are addressing this by making available online ex-copyright material in an environment that allows shared use and annotation, and working with our institution to enable global access to copyrighted print resources, in electronic form. We are employing collaborative tools for asynchronous seminars, and building a knowledge base around the core texts of the programme. For the second residential period we run parallel student-led blogs on predetermined areas of study. All material is shared amongst the whole cohort and staff, and final states of texts are made available more publicly.

## Central Saint Martins short courses online: integrated VLE for art and design

**Damien Borowik**

University of the Arts London

This paper is a presentation of the Virtual Learning Environment project developed for the Central Saint Martins Short Courses Online (VLE). More specifically, this paper aims to present the challenges and opportunities found while facilitating the teaching and learning of art and design practices online.

What tools and methods are useful to teach and learn aspects of Art and Design practices online? Moreover, how can the VLE be designed so that it is flexible enough to accommodate each practice, and yet simple enough for ease of use by the participants?

After choosing the right team for the project, the main focus has been directed on the ways current technology can help facilitate the transmission of tacit knowledge. In a mix of synchronous and asynchronous teaching and learning environments, the participants are able to contribute with each other to the subject at hand, using the various communication tools available.

By considering the role and context of the participants, the dissemination of specific knowledge can be achieved through the VLE in a timely manner, while empowering the learner in the experience of their practice.

The VLE has been designed and developed around the teaching and learning of art and design practices. The selection of the pioneer courses' subject has been as broad as possible to try and accommodate most art and design practices.

The first online course, 'Introduction to Illustration', has been redesigned in parallel to the design of the VLE. Each entity has been informing and shaping the other, in an attempt to transfer as much of the teaching and learning methods used in the traditional course to its online version.

The courses now include Fashion T-shirt Design, Textile Pattern Design, Architectural Drawing, Furniture Design, Painting and Drawing, as well as more conventional subjects for online such as Graphic Design, Art Direction and Advertising.

The foundations of this project are rooted in the participative roles required by teaching and learning online. The environments have thus been created to accommodate multi-modal communication tools, and focused on the tasks required for the transmission and assimilation of knowledge.

While this project is ongoing and constantly improved through action research, the affordances and constraints experienced in the design of the elearning platform and materials have shaped the way each practitioner thinks about the way they disseminate knowledge. Furthermore, it has helped them while facilitating their traditional courses by delivering better content, in a more timely manner, with immediate and noticeable rewards for the learners.

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Stream 3B Room HH203

## 💬 Digital Litter: how obsolete learning technologies can help clarify student understandings of digital literacies

**Vic Boyd**

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### Overview

Students in creative disciplines, such as those studying Art, Design or Architecture at The Glasgow School of Art (GSA), are required within their programmes to balance a combination of academic, information and digital literacies. The unique demands of composite modes of study - studio based learning as well as online and more traditional tutor-led scenarios – requires students to develop confidence in the underpinning principles common to all three literacy areas: adaptability, critical application, collaboration and solution-focused, creative use of educational technologies. For Gillen and Barton (2011), digital literacies refer to ‘constantly changing practices through which people make traceable meanings using digital technologies’ (p. 9). Such meaning-making is key within creative education in encouraging expression, reflection, autonomy and lateral sense making. As such, embracing digital technologies as part of the holistic learning experience enables students to research, develop and articulate ideas in a variety of innovative multimedia formats.

However, students’ use of technology in learning and teaching may not necessarily match existing confidence and competencies of everyday, personal use. As increasing criticism of reductionist concepts such as Generation Y (Manuel 2002) and Digital Natives (Prensky 2001) attest, assumptions are often made on the part of the institution as to students’ use of technology and the perceived ease of transferring principles from the personal domain to the academic. Reaction to the Digital Natives debate now posits it as over-simplistic (Luckin et al 2009), and as harbouring potential for the interpretation of students’ digital literacies to be stronger than they actually are (JISC 2009). As with both academic and information literacies, expectations of applying digital literacies within academic programmes must be made clear to students, both on joining their programme and as requirements change throughout each academic transition. An existing evidence base at GSA (from student IT skills surveys and feedback) points toward students requiring continuous development in using technology for educational purposes.

### Developing DL@GSA – DiG IT!

The DiG IT! (Digital Information Technology) project at GSA combines student and staff perspectives in shaping and delivering a vibrant, accessible and engaging programme of activities aimed at supporting and developing digital literacies. A three phase model for embedding digital literacies across the School offers scope for organisational development opportunities through collegiate ideas exchange as well as collaborative student-focused initiatives. The project draws on existing GSA expertise in information literacy (InfosmART) as well as on the JISC Developing Digital Literacies programme.

A key omission from scholarly work to date would seem to be what students understand by the term digital literacies. In the interests of creating a programme and associated bank of resources that are specific to the creative disciplines, the DiG IT! Project will collect and collate student perspectives to respond to this gap. Interactive and collaborative activities are planned throughout the first academic term of 2012/13 (Sept – Dec) under the title of ‘Digital Litter’. A variety of workshops, online events/ resources and exhibitions will encourage students to reflect creatively on their understandings of learning technologies and digital literacies by conceptualising and capturing obsolete technologies through their preferred media (sketchbook, video, photography, etc). In sharing their observations on what has changed within education technologies and how this informs student expectations, confidence and future projections, a context for developing a continuous programme of staff development activities will be established.

### Workshop outcomes

This session will present an overview of staff perspectives at GSA regarding digital literacies, and on the role they play in students’ current studies and future practice. The session will also invite participants to consider their own

reflections of 'Digital Litter' in this context, as a way of conceptualising the forms of learning technology which we may now consider obsolete, with a view to establishing what the superseded may be. The aim of this exercise is to then open discussion as to comparative expectations of educational institutions as regards their students, and reciprocal student expectations of the institution.

Participants will also be invited to share their reflections and experiences of embedding digital literacies in their learning and teaching practices in the creative arts.

## References

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Manuel, K. (2002) Teaching information literacy to Generation Y. In Durisin, P. ed. *Information literacy programs: successes and challenges*. New York: Hawthorn Information Press, 195 – 218

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# Developing the digital literacy of art & design educators

**Lindsay Jordan**

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## Background

The question of how to engage teachers with learning technologies remains current and pressing, with the development of digital literacy becoming a strategic priority for many institutions (Beetham et al. 2009). Engaging and supporting academics in the appropriate use of technology is the core business of e-learning teams across UK HEIs. Learning technologies have become more user-friendly but their affordances have become more far-reaching; current technologies facilitate new and disruptive models of teaching and learning, which pose a challenge to academia and its established practices. This paper will summarise the approach taken by the Centre for Learning and Teaching in Art & Design in using the Postgraduate Certificate teaching qualification as a conduit for immersion into the world of learning technologies, with the intention of encouraging and empowering participants to consider using similar tools and techniques in their own teaching practice. In sharing our own experience of incorporating technology into the curriculum to explicitly promote both discipline-specific learning outcomes and generic digital literacy, it is hoped that delegates will take away something of relevance to their own context, whether they work with staff or students.

## Approach

The compulsory nature of the UAL Postgraduate Certificate programme has historically provided a valuable opportunity for the course community to capitalise on the range of prior experience that its members bring with them. In previous years this experience fuelled many hours of face-to-face discussion. Over the last twelve months, with significant reductions in staff and contact hours, these discussions have been documented online through participants' blogs. A series of blog-based learning activities, rendered mandatory through self and peer assessment and a low-stakes weighting, have formed the cornerstone of a technology-rich learning landscape. Individual blogs have been used as a base for monthly, assessed activities that promote engagement with literature, writing practice, personal reflection, group discussion and peer feedback. As a tool, blogs were selected not only for their technical suitability, but also to provide teachers with user experience of a technology widely used in creative education and industry, and to enable informed discussion on the topic of open professional practice. The opportunity for personal ownership of spaces and ideas that blogs offer (Farmer, 2004) was also a draw, as it was important in the context of this course that participant responses were seen as personally relevant and non-contestable.

Throughout the course, participants write and discuss through their individual blogs, create feed pages for their learning groups, sign up to present project proposals through GoogleDocs, produce short videos to accompany their project reports, use Cloud applications to upload and access resources, and assess their own and each other's performance through Google Forms. Participants' experiences of using these technologies were collated through workshops, tutorials, surveys and interviews, with particular focus on perceived benefits and challenges, and on any changes in attitude towards open practice and/or the use of blogs. This feedback is informing a number of changes that will be implemented for the following cohort, with recommendations including a more gradual progression towards open practice, and strategies to reduce the impact of participant attrition on peers. We are finding that knowledge of what participants found most challenging, and why, is of great value in redesigning the induction process and

informing future technology choices, whether this means adjusting functionality, selecting different tools or changing the way we use them.

## Results

In addition to the large amounts of data accessible through the participants' blogs and assessments, in-depth participant feedback on their experience has been collected through a range of methods and in a variety of contexts. Through analysing these data, a complex and variable picture begins to emerge of what it means to be digitally literate in the context of art and design education, and what role educational developers can play in accelerating this development across whole institutions. Some key questions remain unanswered; for example whether 'open' is always best, and what degree of comfort with digital technologies is achievable – and desirable - before learners are required to start tackling assessed activities.

## Conclusions

The paper will conclude with an evaluation of the programme's impact on teachers' understanding of and ongoing engagement with learning technologies, and a summary analysis of how specific innovations have supported the official learning outcomes of the programme. The conclusion will also outline how the work will be taken forward into clear and specific revisions to the curriculum and the tools and techniques that are incorporated within it, and changes to the learning activities and assessment methods.

## References

Beetham, H., McGill, L. & Littlejohn, A. (2009) *Thriving in the 21st century: Learning Literacies for the Digital Age*. JISC. <http://www.jisc.ac.uk/media/documents/projects/lidareportjune2009.pdf>

Farmer, J. (2004) *Communication dynamics: Discussion boards, weblogs and the development of communities of inquiry in online learning environments*. In R. Atkinson, C. McBeath, D. Jonas-Dwyer & R. Phillips (Eds) (2004). *Beyond the Comfort Zone: Proceedings of the 21st ASCILITE Conference*. Perth, Western Australia, 5-8 December: ASCILITE. <http://www.ascilite.org.au/conferences/perth04/procs/contents.html>

# 🗨️ A social cycle of everyday learning experiences

**Rachael Taylor**

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This paper will address social media and explore the process of combining creative thinking tools and technology together within a cycle. This was inspired by using the teaching and learning cycle designed by Kolb (1984) in connection with Schon's 'in action and upon action' theories, linking these with; how we learn, interact daily within today's technological world and the process of how we think Buzan (1988). Using the basis of these concepts to develop and design a new learning cycle creating a process that acts as a tool for E-learning, therefore utilising technology to enhance and improve the learning experience. The Kolb (1984) cyclic process works for explaining learning through a particular experience, through this investigation further develop and exploring how we use our interactions to experience technology with a mobile environment. The new cycle is designed to utilise on-going learning and development opportunities, based on how people communicate and collaborate daily to embed technology and create social learning experiences within their everyday life.

The original concept was developed whilst undertaking Action Research with London College of Fashion students and designed to reach the widening participation group. Through the nature of the course being part time with the attention on self-directed study, therefore the focus was on developing an approach that was not time consuming but user friendly. To create an experience that could be conducted independently or collaboratively, to enhance studies and develop lifelong learning skills that were transferable to personal development. To then relate the elements within the cycle to the design process and show how they could work together by interrelating the thinking tools and technology to each element of research, the design thinking process and reflection.

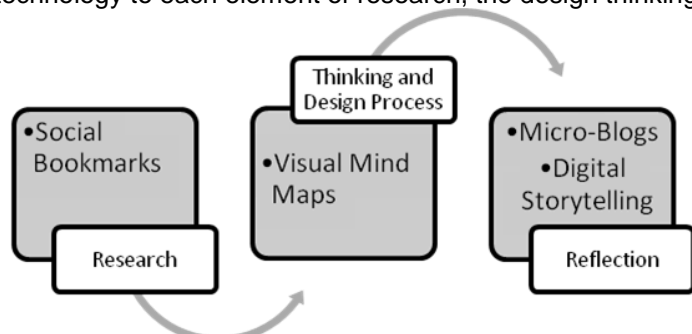
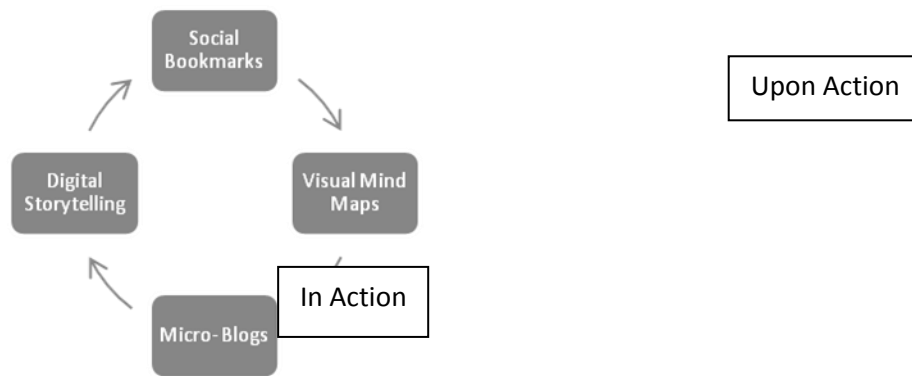


Figure n: "Social Learning Cycle demonstrating the elements of learning".

The delivery of the cycle has been developed to utilise communication tools and devices in various formats that are used within our everyday life, the selection includes social bookmarks, visual mind maps, micro blogs and digital storytelling, which are designed to be used across learning as demonstrated in the above cycle. Each one is designed to feed into the next one in order to extend and deepen the learning experience and is not reliant on being somewhere but can function within a virtual space. As the 'eureka' moments within learning are proved to come at time when we are not thinking about ideas and "this would help maximise learning opportunities as some of the most creative thinking moments happen outside of the study setting". Tosh and Werdmuller.(2004) The reflective qualities that have been built into the cycle act as an important part and the basis of selection, with reference to choosing specific technology for each part of the cycle in order to compliment the concepts and overall aim. Using Schon (1983) theory of in action (when learning is happening) and upon action (when learning has happened). Whilst also considering the layers of learning to utilise opportunities to think and "engage with a variety of levels of reflection" Hatton and Smith (1995).



**Figure n:** "Shows how social bookmarks and visual mind maps are based on reflection upon action and micro blogs, digital storytelling in action."

The use of social bookmarks, concept mapping, micro blogs and storytelling focusing on further reflection skills in and upon action. Using creative thinking tools taps into a higher level of thinking to help form and expand these connections. The design process is divided into three areas and fit with how the cycle utilises tools and technology. Through using social bookmarks and mind maps for research, planning and developing design ideas; micro blogs and digital storytelling for reflection/PPD evaluation. The design cycle helps combine these together to create an opportunity to show how these can be used in conjunction with each other and on-going within learning.

The reason for selecting each element of technology was combined with choosing the theories connected with them, through focusing upon elements within Social Constructivism, Reflective Learning, Conation and Cognitive. Social Constructivism through the principles of scaffolding delivered with social bookmarks and as within mind maps. Reflection through using micro blogs and digital story telling. This is demonstrated within the design of group activities for social learning and to encourage sharing information. "Micro blogs can record a collection of moments and when used in conjunction with learning can help to develop a picture of different levels of focus and patterns of thinking." (Tosh and Wermuller 2004). Through micro blogs as a way of using different lenses of reflection at different times helps think about learning in view to its improvement and continue the Learning cyclic process by (Kolb 1984). Digital Storytelling collects and organises artifacts from experience in an audio visual representation and as (Schon 1983) states it "encourages engagement and participation as the learner has ownership of the production and when representing thoughts through putting it together, reflecting closely on presenting words, images and concepts."

The main aim was to deliver a method that could be used to develop deeper reflection within a short time without affecting the quality of work but enhancing its potential through utilising everyday interactions and experiences. The uniqueness within the development of this idea is how the segments have been combined to work together within a cycle and fit towards a way of linking technologies that use different lenses of reflection at different times. Widening the participation of the learning process to capture active experiences within the moments as they happen, creating an instant way of reflecting in real time. The cycle was also designed to encapsulate key skills for future learning whilst addressing living in an information age where studies have revealed that students are overwhelmed by information. (Pink 2005) The use of a combination of creative and social technological learning tools within my designed learning cycle offers the opportunity for students to explore learning experiences, that are not place or tool bound but can be accessed at anytime, anywhere.

## References

### Book References:

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# Del 2012 Parallel Session 3

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Thurs 6 September



11:15 - 12:45



Stream 3C Room HH313

## Wiki learning: collaboration for the design studio

**David Gelb**

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Internet driven social networking makes the use of wikis among students an intuitive and natural extension for learning with and from their peers. Familiarity and comfort level with social media technologies is well suited for the co-creation of learning artefacts in the wiki environment. Educators employing wiki practises can leverage this socio-technological fluency by introducing classroom activities that translate into meaningful learning experiences in the design studio.

The visibility of an active wiki environment can belie its distributed nature when seen as a composite whole. Depending on the wiki platform, individual authorship is not obvious but can be filtered and searched to derive “who did what and when.” For the most part, the outer layer emphasizes readability and navigation for quick and easy access to content. An important feature in wiki technology is version control; participants can analyse the co-creation process by peeling back the outer skin and revealing the temporal development of the document or artefact. In this way, the progression of ideas can be mapped in reference to time and contributor, revealing the evolution of form and content leading to the document’s current state.

Conversely, participants may think about the wiki as a holistic entity that reflects the current state of the classroom and acts as a central gathering point. In this context, wiki classrooms can be thought of as a “learning communities” in that learning is achieved “through shared problem solving and collaboration” (Meatball Wiki, 2008). By externalizing much of their coursework, students situate themselves in the context of the class population. Individual work is now part of the bigger whole becoming less individualized and more focused on the output of the entire class. This may be apparent when proposing any group task or assignment, however the wiki structure amplifies the sense of community in that “we are all in this together” through its inherent visibility of the entire class efforts. Even when asked to post individual assignments, students soon experience the work of others, which can lead to a deeper reflection of their own contributions within the learning community.

From a pedagogical perspective, the latitude afforded by wiki learning provides multiple opportunities for students to share and learn with their colleagues. New ideas are added by building off existing knowledge to extend the current state of understanding. As new edits are made, successive authors acknowledge this work by progressively integrating new material within the pre-existing class knowledge. In doing so, learning is extended and made explicit in the wiki environment through the semantic network of content. While individuals make connections to construct new ideas, all of the learners participate in building through consensus.

Another model of collaborative learning that highlights the value of collaborative learning is “Communities of Practice” articulated by Lave and Wenger (1991). Communities of practice refers to groups that are “are formed around shared commitments to have the knowledge and practice be applied, effective and produce results that forward the interests of the whole” (McMaster, 1998). Like wiki classrooms, communities of practice have emergent qualities that surface from the bottom up as opposed to being directed and pre-conceived from a top-level authority. Communities of practice are often described as informal but require the right setting to encourage growth. In practical terms, wiki classrooms also need structure and purpose to foster a synergistic and community-oriented environment. The role of the teacher in wiki can help strike the balance between the right amount of pedagogical direction and allowing students to follow their own interests within the learning framework.

### **Case Study– 1st year Undergraduate Design Course**

Interactivity Design 1 is a first-year course offered in 2011 as a requirement in the Bachelors of Design programme at York University, Toronto. This design studio class introduces students to fundamental interactive design concepts and practices. Presented to the students, all course material was housed in a wiki to act as both a learning management system and as a working environment for the publishing student work on going throughout the term. From onset of the course, the instructor emphasized to the students the use of the wiki to document and organize their design process.



In this course, a segment of the grade was attributed to class participation through community building in the form of wiki contributions. On the accompanying wiki page the instructor had posted:

*For class participation, students are required to contribute to the on-going development of the class wiki. This wiki will be the central gathering point for working on ideas, building design knowledge and hosting resources for furthering class understanding.*

This participation component was meant to steer the students towards using the wiki for leveraging the social connections available in their own learning community. Although not mentioned explicitly in the above quote, the collaborative nature of the wiki would be advantageous in expanding their own experience with the course and related concepts. None of the class members had ever used a wiki but most were versed in using social media platforms for enabling exchanges amongst friends and family. The wiki proposed a new paradigm in communication as the focus was course specific and involved a more socially explicit learning space. By stressing the importance of participation in the classroom, the notion of accountability towards themselves, peers and the class as a whole, was further emphasized. Value was placed on providing resources and input that could assist the class in furthering the course objectives, whether directly project related or more generally in their overall design education. Building of FAQs, calendar of events, design inspirations and technical help with the wiki and production software were some of the ways students supported each other's learning. By identifying their own needs and possible solutions, students were actively constructing a dynamic learning community by contributing to class knowledge.

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MeatBall Wiki (2006). *Learning Community*. Retrieved August 22, 2006. <http://www.usemod.com/cgi-bin/mb.pl?LearningCommunity>

McMaster, M.(1998). *Communities of Practice: An Introduction*. Retrieved April 10, 2012. <http://www.co-il.com/coil/knowledge-garden/cop/mmintro.shtml>

# How mobile devices enhance the learning on an art practice based Masters Course

**Jonathan Kearney**

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After 8 years of a successful fully online art practice based Masters course, the recent move to using skype as the key tool for group engagement has facilitated the opportunity for students and staff to connect from mobile devices. Previous tools were bound to the restrictions of desktop or laptop computers but Wheeler (2011) suggests that 'the future of learning is definitely smart mobile'. This paper will outline the structure used for this Masters course that builds a highly effective and supportive environment through a regular rhythm of synchronous chat sessions. It will explain the introduction of Skype as the key tool and how this has facilitated mobile learning. The focus on mobile also extends to other cloud based tools and drawing on a series of focus groups with current students the effectiveness of various tools will be examined.

## References

Wheeler, S. (2011) *The Future of Learning*. [Internet]. Available from: <http://steve-wheeler.blogspot.co.uk/2011/02/future-of-learning.html> [Accessed 13 April 2012].