

MSc in Digital Education



COURSE GUIDE:

Digital futures for learning

Session 2019/20

Contents

Welcome	5
Course learning outcomes	6
Delivery mode and participation etiquette	6
Equipment you will need	6
Course structure and format	6
Assessment	7
Submission dates	9
Rationale for course structure and peer and self assessment	9
Study activities and time commitment	10
Course environments: an overview	11

Welcome

Welcome to *Digital Futures for Learning*. This course gives you the opportunity to consider the trajectory and implications of digital technologies and ways of working for the future of learning. The course takes as its starting point the key themes of

1. Failure
2. Entanglement
3. Surveillance and privacy

and uses them to guide exploration of emerging practices and technologies. We will ask: how are more established digital practices evolving? How will new digital technologies and trends impact on education? How will the students and teachers of tomorrow construct their learning environments and practices?

As we'll see, the answers to these questions are very dependent on context – the future of digital education technologies is volatile and subject to rapid change. For this reason a significant part of the course will be structured around **participant-developed, peer-reviewed “Open Educational Resources” (OERs)**. Each OER will take one of the themes or issues from the initial block as a jumping off point for imagining, debating and theorising what digital futures for learning might be like.

These OERs will be academic in nature, content-driven, and created by a knowledgeable author (you!), but the form they take is up to you, and you will decide, with support from your tutor and peers, how best to structure and deliver your OER. More on this below.

This is an explicitly 'blue skies thinking' course. It aims to encourage you to be critical consumers and producers of new technologies as they emerge, and to give you tools for thinking about and responding to the promises and threats of the 'next big thing'. In addition, the course's structure allows you to engage with new technologies and ideas in an exploratory way – as you create OER topics for the second half of the course, you can lead the way in helping your peers to contextualise emerging trends and ideas.

Have a fantastic semester.

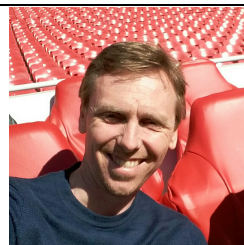


Dr Jen Ross (course organiser)

jen.ross@ed.ac.uk

Twitter: @jar

+44 (0)131 651 6133



Stuart Allan (co-tutor)

Email: s9457011@sms.ed.ac.uk

Twitter: @OpenPlanStuart

Course learning outcomes

On completion of this course, you will:

- be able critically to consider and situate new and emerging trends and technologies;
- be aware of some of the social factors influencing technological innovation, and of emerging technological factors influencing society;
- be able to identify the potential of emerging technologies and environments for teaching and learning;
- demonstrate practical skill in the deployment of emerging technologies for learning purposes.

Delivery mode and participation etiquette

The course is delivered – entirely online – through a combination of environments. The core environment for course communication is Moodle, and you'll find our course site at <https://www.moodle.is.ed.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=1359> . This is where you will find discussion space, announcements and information, and course readings and resources. Some parts of the course site will be open access, so that others beyond the course will be able to engage with it. These will be clearly marked. Registered students will have access to this site from Monday 9 September, 2019.

The course is quite flexible in terms of how you structure your workload, though there will be one-hour synchronous tutorial sessions offered in some weeks, which you are encouraged to attend. In Block Four (weeks 9–12) you **must** engage with the OERs developed by other students on the course, and will be responsible for providing feedback for **three** of these.

The nature of this course means that what you get out of it will depend as much on the other course participants as on your tutors and the course material we have created. Their OERs, and their participation in and feedback on yours, make up a significant part of both your time and the mark you receive for this course. The ethos of this course is therefore one of active, collegial and constructive participation.

Equipment you will need

You will need a computer with a broadband connection. You will be given guidance by peers in Block 3 as to which technologies you will need for their OERs, but in general it is assumed that you will be able to:

- Listen to audio and view video.
- Access and use Blackboard Collaborate – please work through the “session preparation & checklist” at least a week before the first tutorial session.
<http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/information-services/services/learning-technology/communication/collaborate/session-preparation>

Course structure and format

The course will be divided into four blocks. Block One, lasting 5 weeks, will involve reading around the core themes and considering the key literature and ideas associated with each. Block Two will consist of a 2-week position paper writing period, and Block 3 is an Open Education Resource (OER) preparation period. The final 3-week block, Block Four, will be

taken up with engaging with and evaluating the OERs of your peers, and revising and reflecting on your OER for final submission.

Block 1

Weeks 1-5: orientation, exploring the literature, developing topic ideas

In this block, you will be introduced to the course and its aims, and will read broadly around the course themes, participating in discussions and synchronous tutorials. By the end of the block you will have decided on an area you would like to focus on for your position paper and OER.

Block 2

Weeks 6-7: position paper preparation

This is an independent research and writing block. Your position paper – which will form the basis of the content for your OER development in Block 3 – is due at the end of week 7. Your tutor will be on hand to support this process. Your paper will be on a topic of your choice which is relevant to the course themes and the broad subject of “digital futures”. Topics will be published, and peer-reviewers for the OERs allocated, at the end of week 7.

Block 3

Weeks 8-9: OER development

You will be responsible for planning and developing 3 hours of learning for your peers, in the form of an OER (Open Educational Resource) based on your position paper topic. This block will involve a combination of working through OER guidance and resources, discussing OER development, and developing your own OER. Your OER must be published and available at the end of week 9.

Block 4

Weeks 10-12: Engaging with OERs

The final three weeks of the course will consist of students participating in and providing feedback on the OERs of their peers. You will be expected to provide formal feedback on three of the OERs, and engage with others in weekly “crit” discussions. During this period you will also begin to finalise your OER for final submission. In week 12, we will look back over the course and plan for the next phase of the OERs.

Assessment

A note on word counts: The absolute minimum/maximum for the position paper is +/-10% (so, the minimum is 1800, maximum 2200). However, this is *not* an invitation to write 2200 words! Aim for as close to the 2000 limit as possible, but don’t worry if you go a little over or under – that’s the purpose of the margin.

Word counts *include* anything in the assignment up to the references (including tables, footnotes, and so on). References and appendices are not included in the word count. Please state the word count at the start of the assignment. Those going over or under the 10% margin will be considered not to have met the requirements for the assignments, and mark penalties are therefore likely to result.

Position paper (40%): You will write a 2000 word position paper which extends the themes from Block 1 in a direction which is of personal or professional interest and relevance to you. This paper is due on **Monday 4 November 2019**.

Assignment 1, Position Paper criteria:

Knowledge and understanding of concepts: *is the topic well defined, the key concepts explained clearly, and the link with the course themes and with digital education made explicit? Does the paper take a critical approach to the topic?*

Knowledge and use of the literature: *Is the appropriate scholarly literature drawn on in framing the topic? Are relevant course readings discussed and critically explored in relation to the topic?*

Constructing academic discourse: *Is the position paper produced with careful attention to the quality of the writing and the skilful expression of ideas? Is it scholarly in its approach to the topic?*

Open Educational Resource (50% peer reviewed/tutor marked, 10% self assessed):

You will design, develop and publish an Open Educational Resource (OER) based on your position paper topic. This may be theoretical and exploratory, involve a critical perspective on a new technology or environment, or be a problem- or issue-based resource. It can use interactive elements, as well as textual, visual, audio or multimedia communication across a single or a range of environments. The main requirement of the resource is that it engages the rest of the class in considering, in a scholarly way, issues relevant to the course. You may eventually wish to make your resource more widely available – to others on the programme, or beyond – and the feedback you receive from your peers can help you to improve and develop your resource for this purpose.

This assignment will be submitted in two stages. **Stage 1** is your block 3 work, culminating in a complete OER, ready to be used by your peers in Block 4. This is due on **Monday 18 November 2019**. During Block 4, groups will engage with one another's OERs, with each group member providing detailed feedback for three others. You will receive this feedback at the start of week 12.

In **Stage 2**, you will consider the feedback you've received, and what you have learned from engaging with other OERs. You will use this to revise your OER in whatever way you feel is appropriate, and submit a link to your final OER, along with a reflective commentary of 500 words and a self assessment mark, on **Monday 16 December 2019**.

Assignment 2, OER assessment criteria:

Knowledge and understanding of concepts: *Did the OER show the author's knowledge and understanding of core concepts from the course? Did it expand on or extend the course themes? Was its engagement with digital futures explicit? Did it enhance peer reviewers' understanding, as participants?*

Knowledge and use of the literature: *Did the OER draw on academic literature from the course and beyond in a compelling and engaging way? Did the use of literature come across as authoritative?*

Planning and implementation of OER: *Was the OER well organised and thought out? Was its use of technology appropriate and successful? Was the OER complete and usable?*

Development of professional practice: *Was the OER contextualised in relation to digital education? Did the OER stimulate peer reviewers in relation to their own professional practice or thinking?*

(For the 500 word reflective commentary):

Reflection

Is a clear account given of the choices made in developing and presenting the OER? Does the reflective commentary show awareness of and engagement with both the students' own and other participants' experiences of the OER? Are changes made in light of discussion, and peer feedback, clearly described and justified?

Submission dates

You must submit your 2000 word position paper (Assignment 1) in Moodle by the end of week 7 of the course, **Monday 4 November 2019**.

Your OER (Assignment 2, stage 1) will be published by the start of week 10, **Monday 18 November 2019**, with the link submitted in Moodle, and made available to the group.

Your final OER (Assignment 2, stage 2) and reflective commentary must be submitted in Moodle by **Monday 16 December 2019**.

Rationale for course structure, peer feedback and self assessment

For us the key to this course is the way it is co-created by its participants. This is important because of the subject matter of the course – digital futures – and how quickly the topics of interest will evolve. Creating a sustainable and exciting course of this nature needs a pedagogical approach which is both carefully structured and open in terms of content.

There will be considerable flexibility in the way your Open Educational Resource (OER) is structured and presented – you can use a combination of environments and activities, and make use of digital environments of your choice. The important things are that:

- the OER can be completed with the three hours allocated (including any additional assigned reading);
- the OER engages and involves participants in considering, in a scholarly way, issues relevant to the course content.

In other words, the benefit of the OER is not primarily intended to be for the student who creates it – it is equally for the students who will participate in it (Boud et al 1999). If an OER is of high quality, then the whole cohort will benefit, as these OERs make up the whole of the course content in block 4.

For this reason, it is important that the assessment of these OERs is as consequential as possible: that it reflects the purpose of the assignment, which is to facilitate learning for the whole student group. Therefore, OERs will be reviewed by peers, using an assessment rubric developed by the course tutors. It seems logical and fair that the intended beneficiaries of the OERs be the ones to judge their quality and effectiveness. The peer feedback will be taken into account by the tutors in allocating the mark for the OER (worth 50% of the final grade), with an additional 10% coming from self-assessment, which allows the OER author to assess their own performance, and also to take account of factors which may not be so visible to the audience (the effect of time constraints or of trying innovative environments, for example).

This peer review combines with tutor assessment of the position paper (40%) to give each student a rounded picture of the strengths and weaknesses of their OER structure, content and design. We hope that many of you will find this of particular value in your development as teachers and developers of your own resources, and will benefit from this type of in-depth assessment of a learning resource you have created, as well as from the experience of providing feedback and assessing the resources of your peers.

Useful references include:

Boud, D., Cohen, R. and Sampson, J. (1999). Peer Learning and Assessment. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 24/4.

Collis, B. and Moonen, J. (2008) Web 2.0 tools and processes in higher education: quality perspectives. *Educational Media International*, 45/2, 93-106.

Dochy, F., Segers, M. and Sluijsmans, D. (1999). The Use of Self-, Peer and Co-assessment in Higher Education: a review. *Studies in Higher Education*, 24/3.

Falchikov, N. (1995). Peer Feedback Marking: Developing Peer Assessment. *Innovations in Education and Teaching International*, 32/2.

Keppell, M., Au, E., Chan, C. (2006). Peer learning and learning-oriented assessment in technology-enhanced environments. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 31/4.

Race, P. (2001). *A Briefing on Self, Peer and Group Assessment*. York: LTSN Generic Centre.

Topping, K. (1998). Peer Assessment Between Students in Colleges and Universities. *Review of Educational Research*, 68/3.

Study activities and time commitment

Study activity	Time commitment (hours)
Synchronous discussion	10
Reading in set and additional texts	70
Position paper and OER preparation	70
Participation in and peer feedback on OERs	40
OER review and submission	10
total	200

Course environments: an overview

The main course space for Digital Futures for Learning is in Moodle, at <https://www.moodle.is.ed.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=1359> . Registered students will be given access to the site from Monday 9 September, 2019.

Digital Futures for Learning, September 2019



Digital Futures for Learning gives you the opportunity to consider the trajectory and implications of digital technologies for the future of learning. It takes as its starting point the key themes of failure, entanglement, and surveillance and privacy, and uses them to guide exploration of emerging practices and technologies. We will ask: how are more established digital practices evolving? How will new digital technologies and trends impact on learning? How will the students and teachers of tomorrow construct their learning environments and practices?

The twitter hashtag for the course is #dfled .

Moodle is your first stop for course content, readings and handbook, announcements, discussion forums, and assignment submission. Our synchronous tutorials, using Collaborate, are also accessed from the Moodle course site.

Other core tools and environments we will use on the course include:

- Collaborate (virtual classroom – accessed from within Moodle)
- Twitter: <http://twitter.com/>

There may be additional technologies and digital environments used in some of the OERs.

Collaborate

Our synchronous tutorials for the course will be held in Collaborate. Collaborate allows real-time video, audio and text discussion. If you have a webcam, we invite you to join in by video, but at minimum please ensure that you have a microphone and earphones so that you can contribute to the conversation. The purpose of meeting in ‘real time’ is to foster a sense of presence and community during the early weeks of the course, and to have a chance to meet up periodically after that.

It is expected that you will work through the Collaborate “session preparation & checklist” at least a week before the first tutorial session. <http://edin.ac/15fhY5R> . If you need any help with getting set up with Collaborate, please contact the IS Helpline at IS.Helpline@ed.ac.uk.

Twitter

Twitter will be a space of ‘ambient collegiality’ through the course – use it to share links and resources, update the group about how you are getting on, and generally be sociable. See the technologies handbook for suggestions about how to manage your Twitter activities. The hashtag for the course will be #dfled – use this in any tweets you send so that other course members can find you. Please note also that you need to make your tweets public before they will be visible in the course hashtag stream.