



An approach to meeting the ICT requirements of the social work degree

***Jim Rogers, Sue Watling
University of Lincoln***

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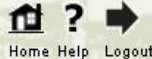
ICT Competencies; background

- 2003/4 GSCC requirement for ECDL or equivalent
- “The challenge facing social work is to harness the power of ICT and use it for the benefit of service users.”
(Holt and Rafferty 2005)
- Two models suggested:
 - Separate and distinct testing e.g. passing the ECDL,
 - Assessment of ECDL elements embedded into the social work curriculum.

Automated on Blackboard



Blackboard 09/10
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Home Help Logout

Home Sites Library Community Content Store Help System Admin

Announcements

Hull Students

Lincoln Students

Study Skills

Library Info

ICT Revision

Assessments

Tools

Communication
Site Tools
My Portfolios
Site Map

Control Panel
Quick Unenrol

Refresh
Detail View

These resources are designed for all versions of Windows up to and including Windows XP, and for MS Office 2003. If you are using a later version of Windows or Office you may find some variation with images and layout. Contact Kev Cooper (kcooper@lincoln.ac.uk) if you have any queries regarding these materials.

The areas are:

- Introducing Computers
- Managing Folders and Files
- Spreadsheets
- Database
- Presentations
- Internet and Email.

Competency in Word Processing will be assessed via your assignments.

Your tutors will advise you of the dates when the tests should be taken.



ICT Assessments - Equivalent Qualification Test

If you already have an ICT qualification you may not need to take the Blackboard ICT Assessment tests. Please click the link above and fill in the questions.

Mark Reviewed



Introducing Computers

Mark Reviewed



Managing Folders and Files

Mark Reviewed



Spreadsheets with MS Excel

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- Model 1. -ECDL
 - Abandoned through time and cost issues
- Model 2 -ECDL elements embedded in curriculum
 - Difficulties tracking student progress across large teaching team
- Model 3. Automated system using VLE to deliver:
 - Equivalent qualification test
 - ICT resources
 - Formative and summative assessments – content similar to ECDL
 - Collated results in a single document

Evaluations (students)

- I liked that you could practice the test first and until you get the right answers.
- I liked the format...it was easier to read, therefore easier to understand.
- Easy to use and navigate around.
- The learning materials were sometimes too much.
- It was helpful to have everything in one place.

Evaluations (staff)

- I think the current system using Blackboard is absolutely great and has worked very well this year . It makes it much easier to track students' progress and helps them to take responsibility for their own learning in ICT. I personally like it much better than embedding ICT in individual modules - it is easier for me, as the person responsible, to keep control of it all.
- Although it is time consuming to put the tests on Blackboard (I have put them on for three different groups more than once) the time spent doing it is definitely worth it.
- For the person who previously had to manually collate the information for over 100 students in year one, the fact that this is now automated is a blessed relief

How is it for you?

- Where's that piece of paper?
- I put it down here somewhere...



What happened next...

- Revised QAA subject benchmark for social work (February 2008)
- GSCC change to the ECDL requirement (September 2009)
- Phasing out of student competence to level of ECDL
- Replaced with alternative criteria for demonstrating ICT competency

GSCC guidance 2009

“It remains essential that social work students develop IT literacy during their training and that social work practitioners and managers are able to ethically use the IT applications, tools and systems they will encounter in practice”



“Our school computers are a month old. How can we become competitive in the job market, if we are being trained on obsolete equipment?”

GSCC guidance 2009

- We are concerned that some of the assumptions in the latest GSCC guidance, for example that most people coming into university will already have the requisite ICT literacy, may hide a much more varied picture, and may inadvertently reinforce digital exclusion.
- The GSCC guidance suggests that most students coming into higher education will have taken Key skills courses in ICT and that HEA (SWAP) has deemed that the Key skills curriculum is more relevant than that of ECDL.
- The guidance goes on to suggest that *“Even with older students the lack of IT skills is not the problem it used to be and these students too will need to learn a range of IT skills to engage with their course”*.

What is missing?

- For older students who have not been exposed to the Key Skills curriculum and for younger students who have not achieved Key Skills qualifications, this puts the onus on course providers to assess the capabilities of students and then to provide the required skills development where it is lacking.
- It is also the case that Key skills and other generic ICT programmes cannot provide some of the specialised content required for the use of ICT in social work practice

QAA Subject benchmark

- Honours graduates in social work should be able to use ICT methods and techniques to support their learning and their practice. In particular, they should demonstrate the ability to:
 - use ICT effectively for professional communication, data storage and retrieval and information searching
 - use ICT in working with people who use services
 - demonstrate sufficient familiarity with statistical techniques to enable effective use of research in practice
 - apply numerical skills to financial and budgetary responsibilities
 - have a critical understanding of the social impact of ICT, including an awareness of the impact of the 'digital divide'

2010 Adaptation of existing system

- Opportunity to revise ICT practices
- Retained existing resources and tests
- Six separate exams merged into one
- Use of Blackboard Question pool facility
- Automatic selections of questions (no two students get the same)
- Robust, secure, efficient, student-centered.

2010 Adaptation of existing system

Additions to our programme, to meet the benchmarks that cannot be assessed using on line tests.

2010 Adaptation of existing system

Benchmark - “ *use ICT effectively for professional communication, data storage and retrieval and information searching*”

Benchmark “ *use ICT in working with people who use services*”

Development of new guidance for students in relation to placements.
Sessions devoted to this in 'readiness for practice' sessions prior to 1st placement

Covers a range of issues including :

- Typical data systems used in local authority and other agencies
- Confidentiality and rules governing the sharing and security of electronic information.
- The use of social networking sites such as facebook
- The use of mobile phones with cameras during placements.
- Ensuring that ICT is an aid, and not a barrier, to partnership working

2010 Adaptation of existing system

Benchmark - “ *use ICT effectively for professional communication, data storage and retrieval and information searching*”

Benchmark “ *use ICT in working with people who use services*”

- Links to easily available online resources such as <http://www.vts.intute.ac.uk/tutorial/socialwork/>
- A range of sessions offered to students in year one, under the heading of research and study skills.
- Partly related to demand and individual need, but includes: use of library and learning resources; electronic journal searching; use of typical database and presentation software; use of specialist software such as refworks

2010 Adaptation of existing system

Benchmark - *“apply numerical skills to financial and budgetary responsibilities”*

To meet this benchmark, we have developed a task for students to complete, using a spreadsheet to carry out an example of the type of financial task which may be typical of working in modern adult services. (see handout)

2010 Adaptation of existing system

Benchmark- *“demonstrate sufficient familiarity with statistical techniques to enable effective use of research in practice”*

- Limited coverage of this subject in an existing module – knowledge Informed practice.
- New Links to useful on line learning material within the university web environment – assistance from university statisticians
- Dedicated slots within 'study skills 'programme for first year undergraduates.

References

- Holt, J and Rafferty, J. (2005) A guide to meeting the requirement for social work degree students to achieve ICT skills.

Contact details

Jim Rogers, Senior Lecturer

jrogers@lincoln.ac.uk

Sue Watling, T & L Coordinator

swatling@lincoln.ac.uk

University of Lincoln

Hull School of Health and Social Care

George Street

Hull