

PREPARING KING'S STUDENTS FOR SUCCESS WITH THE ESSENTIAL DIGITAL SKILLS PROGRAMME- IMPACT SUMMARY

AUGUST 2021

Introduction

This paper provides a brief overview of the results of the student essential digital skills programme that was created and implemented at King's College London for the 2020-2021 academic year, and the impact and benefits of the programme.

Programme Usage Stats

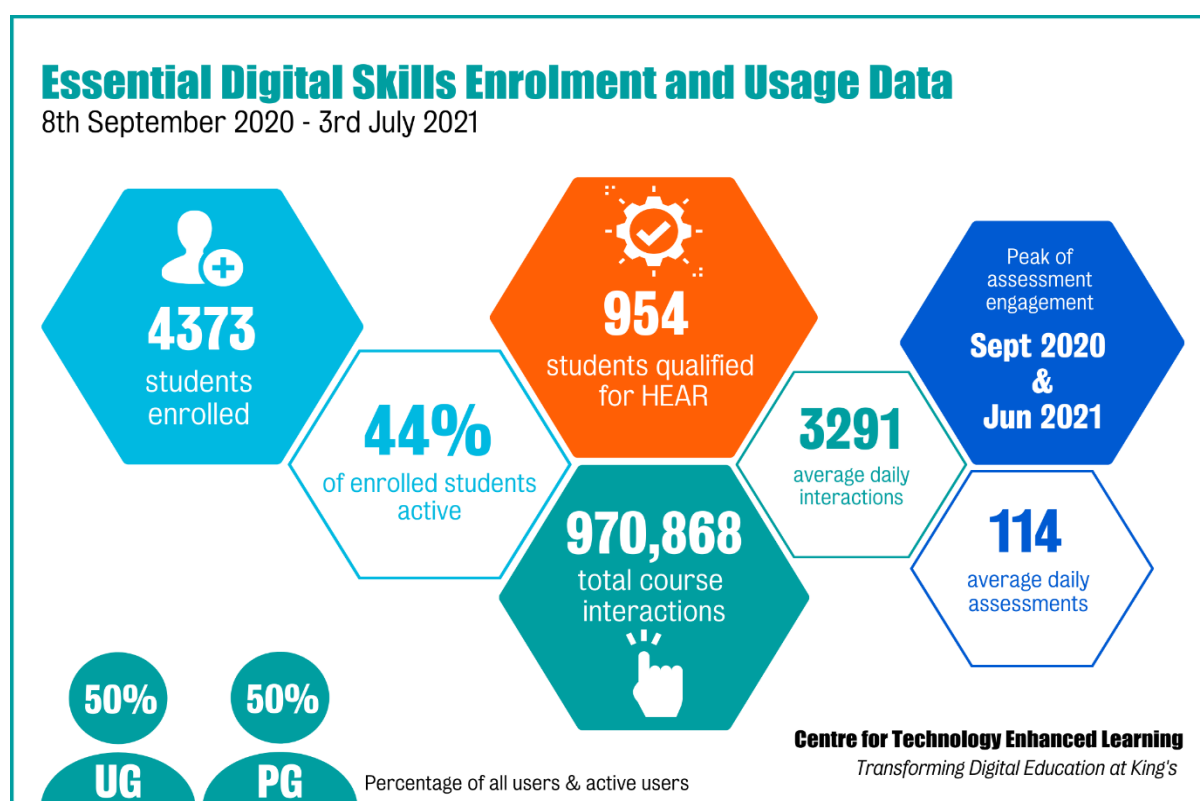


Figure 1: Essential Digital Skills Programme Enrolment & Usage Data Infographic

Chapter perceived ease of use

The below table indicates the percentage of students who strongly or somewhat agreed with the corresponding statements which were designed to measure ease of use.

	Chapter 1	Chapter 2	Chapter 3	Chapter 4
	*based on 1157 responses	*based on 754 responses	*based on 739 responses	*based on 744 responses
It was easy to navigate through materials	95%	87%	94%	94%

Material was clearly presented	94%	89%	94%	93%
Materials was presented in an engaging way	86%	81%	89%	87%
Material was well organised	94%	87%	94%	94%
Material was at the right level for me	83%	86%	88%	88%

Table 1: Perceived ease of use by chapter

Programme Impact

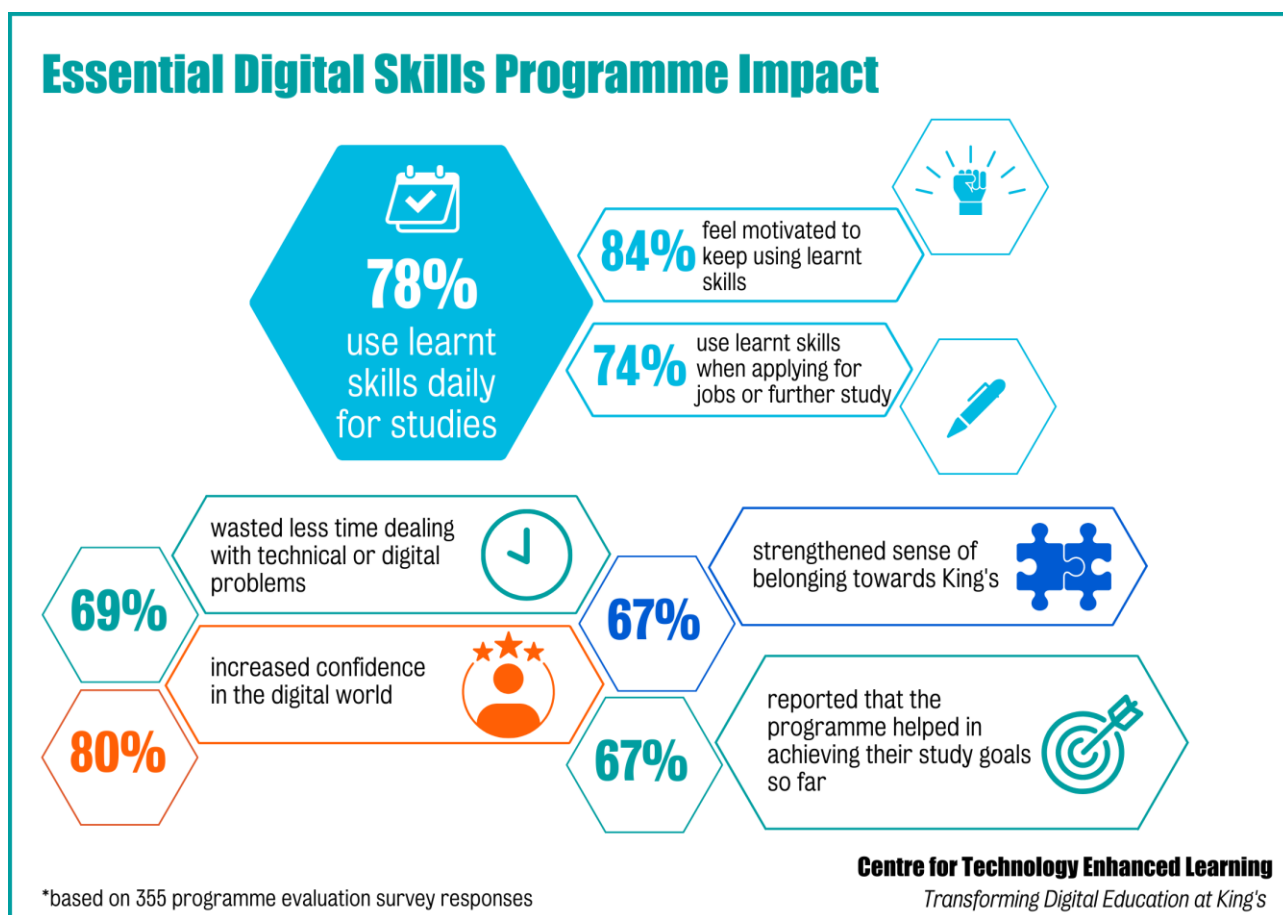


Figure 2: Essential Digital Skills Programme Impact Infographic

Overall Programme Reaction

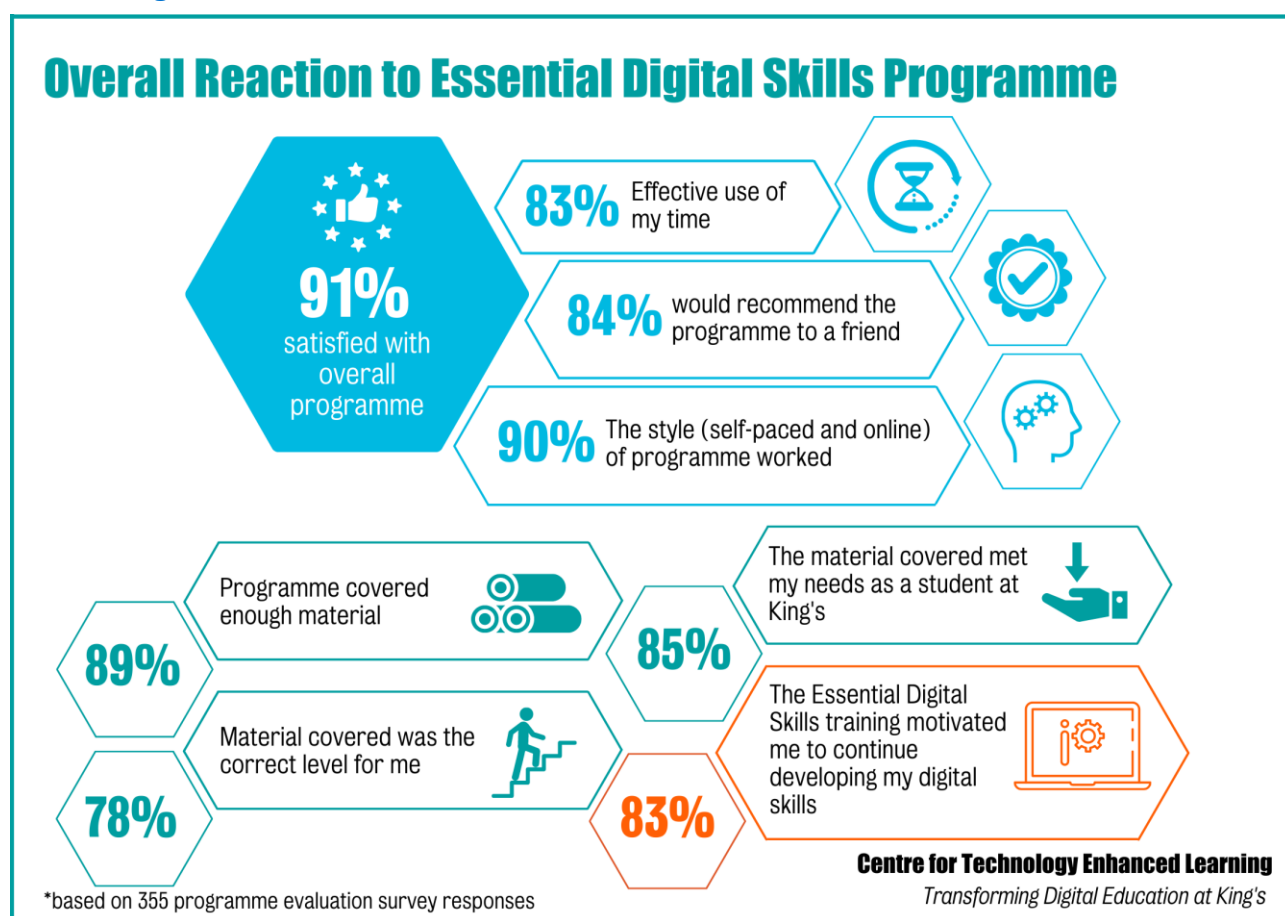


Figure 3: Essential Digital Skills Programme Reaction Infographic

Benefits Realisation and the Programme Aims

The Essential Digital Skills Programme had several aims which were achieved, thus providing benefits.

- 1. Raise awareness about the essential digital skills programme and the importance of digital capabilities**
 - 4373 students enrolled onto the programme this academic year
 - There were over 5000 unique views of the essential digital skills programme trailer, that outlined the definition of digital capabilities and its importance.
 - 83% of the students that completed the programme evaluation are motivated to continue developing their digital skills.
- 2. Increase access to digital skills training to support students' academic, professional, and personal development.**

- The programme was fully online and data from the KEATS analytics, and both the chapter and programme evaluation indicated that students from over 130 countries across the world were able to access the programme.
 - Covid restrictions would have made it impossible to deliver the programme via classroom or blended learning method. Even without Covid, it would have been difficult and costly to deliver the Essential Digital Skills Programme at the same scale that was achieved.
- 3. Ensure students are aware of key services, systems and processes that are available to support their academic, professional, and personal development**
- The programme content included details about the key services, systems, and processes available to support them at King's. For example, out of the 1157 students that completed the chapter 1 survey, 79% found chapter 1.3 Introducing King's Digital Tools for Learning extremely or very useful. This chapter provides a clear and concise overview of the support offered by IT, King's Academy, Library Services and Student Services Online.
 - There is evidence to suggest that the programme positively impacted students' engagement with other services mentioned via the programme. For example, 8 of the top 10 most popular LinkedIn Learning courses viewed across King's were included in the Essential Digital Skills Programme.
- 4. Increase student's confidence in using technology to support the learning and development throughout their time at King's and beyond.**
- 80% of students who completed the programme evaluation strongly agreed or somewhat agreed that the Essential Digital Skills Programme increased their confidence in the digital world.
- 5. Increase student's digital competence to support their academic development**
- The inclusion of quizzes enabled the student's learning to be reinforced and measured. 954 students successfully completed the programme and relevant assessments. These students had to achieve an 80% or above pass mark for each of the 17 quizzes. Furthermore, those completing the programme evaluation also answered 17 MCQ assessing programme content. Although testing did not take place prior to students doing the programme, the quizzes, along with the evaluation findings and self-reflection questions provides confidence that learning would have taken place.

Benefits Realisation and the Education Strategy

The Essential Digital Skills Programme was aligned to the King's Education strategy, and some of the benefits from the programme would enable the education strategy to meet its goals.

- 1. Expand learning opportunities through flexing the curriculum and increasing access to co-curricular activities-** The Essential Digital Skills Programme is high-quality, is responsive to changing demands, and supports flexible learning. The fact that it is self-paced, fully online and runs alongside student's academic programme enables King's students all over the world to access the resource. Academic programmes can signpost the Essential Digital Skills Programme, to increase students access to co-curricular activities.

2. **Ensure all King's students are equipped for success-** The Essential Digital Skills Programme develops students' skills, attributes, and motivation to set them up for success. One of the strengths of the Essential Digital Skills Programme is that it provides a holistic perspective of the skills students need to succeed both at King's and after they graduate. Combining IT skills, academic skills, study skills and employability skills enabled students to understand why and how these skills are interdependent whilst also introducing students to other resources where they can gain deeper knowledge (e.g., Student Services Online Knowledge articles). The programme can be used to support the below priority initiatives:
 - a. **Support student transitions in, through and out of King's.-** Chapter 1 and 2 of the Essential Digital Skills Programme has proven to be beneficial to new students in giving them an overview of the academic, technical, study skills and employability support available at King's. These chapters also provide information on what students need to know prior to starting their academic programme at King's (e.g., internet safety). Individual differences found that the programme made a greater contribution to first year students' skills than latter years.
 - b. **Address institutional bias and close attainment gaps-** Although the programme provided effective training in digital skills for all students, individual differences did exist in training experience, notably around ethnicity and student status, with BAME students and international students feeling that the training made a greater contribution to their skill levels and resulting in greater behaviour change and impact as well as intention to undertake further training. The Essential Digital Skills Programme can therefore be used to mitigate biases and serve to support BAME and/or disadvantaged students.
 - c. **Equip staff and students to make best use of physical and digital learning resources-** The current programme outlines the key services, systems, processes, and resources that are available, and provides guidance on how to access and/or use them effectively.
3. **Support positive wellbeing as a fundamental ethos of the university-** The Essential Digital Skills Programme is a co-curricular activity that supports mental wellbeing, through the theme wellbeing in the digital world. Throughout the programme, students are given practical advice and guidance on how to stay safe online, and how to access wellbeing support within King's. Chapter 3 of the programme has a section called Ensuring Wellbeing in a Digital Environment, in which 77% out of the 739 students that completed the chapter evaluation survey found the content to be extremely or very useful.
4. **Embrace students as co-creators of the educational experience-** King's students were part of the Student Learning Support Task and Finish Group and supported the programmes development. Student evaluation data was collected in a rigorous manner, allowing further development based on their views. Students from the Digital Education Student Committee had previously outlined some of their experiences with KEATS and problems they were facing regarding digital skills at King's. Working with these students reinforced the importance of having a holistic and student focused approach to digital skills training, and enabled solutions for some of the problems they had outlined to be included within the Essential Digital Skills Programme.