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People, Partnerships and Pedagogies

Building a Digital Education Library: Empowering Agency in Staff Professional Development and Collaboration

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As a formal institutional structure, university libraries represent at their core the collective knowledge and opportunity for deep personalised learning and professional development across the traditionalist subject matters. As professionals working within rapidly-evolving fields of online learning, in particular those around Learning Design, we do not have this same level of access or historical record as more traditional subjects (Elmborg, 2011). The Digital Education Library is an exploration of bridging this gap in a collaborative, co-curated, less formal approach to professional development.

In adapting the library structure to meet the needs and breadth of our team, we also have the opportunity to modernise for access and inclusion. This design accounts for the needs of modern hybrid work models and encourages recognition of the breadth of skills, knowledge, and interests existing within our own team structures. The [institution]'s Digital Education division comprises of four smaller areas; a Learning Design, Learning Media, Learning Environments, and Exams & e-Assessments teams, under its broader banner. These interconnected roles each add value and contexts to library content and design (Ilahi et al., 2019). With a diverse team from dispersed locations, curation and access to digital resources and physical books are embedded in the design to normalise and facilitate hybrid teams.

With these factors considered, building a Digital Education library gathers a broad range of themes related to third space design needs. The platform chosen utilises a hybrid approach (UNESCO, 2003), alongside a physical library of works, focused on not just instructional design, but a broad range of adjacent themes related to the areas of the Digital Education division – assessment design, media and graphic design, user experience, learning design, academic development, as well as works focused on the scholarship of teaching & learning, leadership, team culture, and data literacy. The range of themes explored is intentionally designed to foster partnerships between areas of the team, and hold intentional and visible space for professional development. Agency within the team is also fostered through opportunity for co-creation, through the option for team members to easily share resources they've found interesting, with relevant tags, descriptors, and templates (see figure 1).
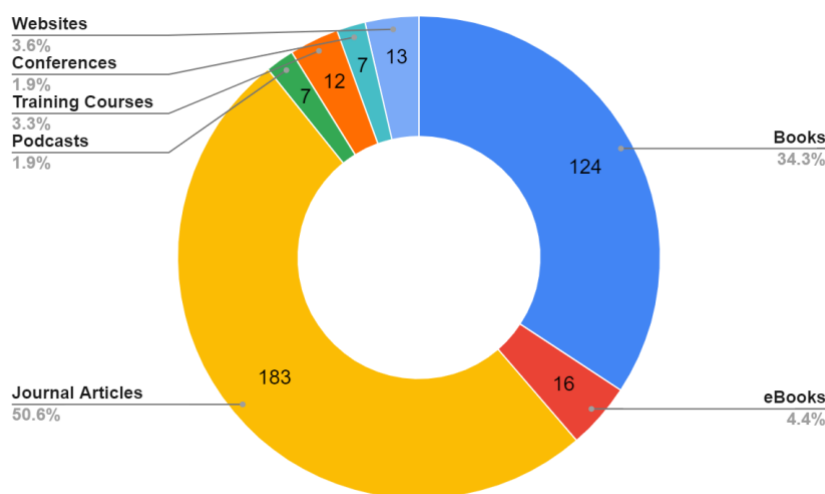

Figure 1.
Submitted Digital Education Library entries by format since launch in February 14th 2023

This presentation will explore the Digital Education Library and its design process, from its dual

perspective roles as both a library of digital education, and a digital library of education.

Keywords: professional development, learning design, digital education, curation, staff agency

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