



Enhancing Workplace Learning through Mobile Technology: Designing the GPS for WPL

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Technology-mediated learning (TML) and workplace learning (WPL) are major priorities for universities. TML is core to the dynamic growth and modernization of university education, and WPL is an essential strategy used by universities to prepare students for future work. In Australia, both are rapidly changing practices, providing new possibilities and challenges. Though these two areas have largely remained separate in educational literature and practice, the integration of TML and WPL can provide important opportunities to bridge university and the workplace as well as build students' digital capacities and online professional identities. This poster presents a mobile resource for students, named the "GPS for WPL", aimed at helping students, academics and workplace educators to improve professional learning experiences by making better use of mobile technology. This resource was designed as part of a project funded by the Office for Learning and Teaching, entitled "Enhancing Workplace Learning through Mobile Technology".

Keywords: Mobile learning, mobile resource, workplace learning

Project background

"Enhancing Workplace Learning Through Mobile Technology" is a two-year research project that commenced in February 2015. It is a multi-site project led by CSU and conducted in collaboration with The University of Sydney, The University of Western Sydney and Deakin University. The aim is to develop and pilot a set of resources to help students, academics and workplace educators make better use of personal, mobile technologies to connect learning and work, and improve workplace practices. These resources will be integrated in what we are calling a mobile technology capacity-building framework for workplace learning – a set of materials and methods that can help all participants clarify their understandings of the main issues and opportunities, and improve their technology-mediated learning, practice and teaching skills.

Conceptual framework

This project draws on three sets of theoretical ideas: a) fostering the development of students' agency (capacity to act) in WPL (Billett, 2011); b) translating research-based evidence into tools and resources that university teachers can use in course and curriculum design (Goodyear & Markauskaite, 2012); and, c) theorising the relations between technology, workplaces and work practices to sharpen conceptions of learning to participate in technology-mediated practices (Moen et al., 2012).

The GPS for WPL is the first outcome of this project. It primarily realizes the first two sets of ideas and aims to provide students with a resource that helps to enhance their agency to use mobile technologies skillfully and knowledgeably in workplace. This initial resource has been developed to support students' WPL by focusing on how mobile technology can help with their learning on placement and prepare them for practice. The GPS is a resource that complements general

preparation for WPL and could be used in various professional courses (nursing, education, etc.). Further, as digital technology is rapidly changing, this resource is neither focusing on providing a list of apps nor is it solely about enhancing digital literacies.

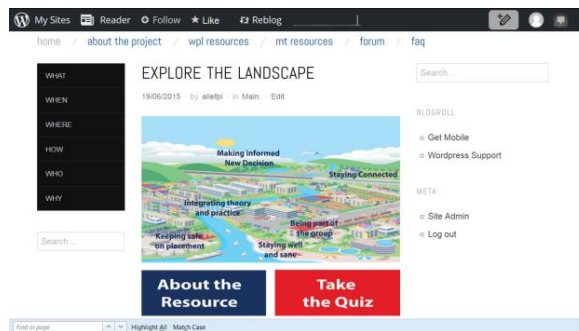


Figure 1: GPS for WPL homepage

The design and structure

The development process of GPS for WPL was based on iterative 5 steps model:

1. Review of the literature on mobile technology and WPL
2. Consultation with local and international expert reference groups
3. Initial (Stage 1) design and development of the resource
4. Test by student users as well as academics, learning and workplace educators
5. Follow-up (Stage 2) refinement and development

The GPS for WPL (<https://gps4wpl.wordpress.com>) has been created using Wordpress. It includes two main and four complementary entry points: The Landscape; Guiding questions; FAQ; Quiz; Sitemap; and Search, respectively. The landscape represents *common purposes* of mobile technology in WPL, such as staying connected, making informed decisions, and integrating theory and practice (Figure 1). The *guiding questions* of What, When, Where, How, Who, and Why to use technology provide tips, reflective questions, exercises and further links. The resource includes internal webpages and blog posts and links to external objects (e.g., webpages, videos, documents). Most content can be accessed through between 1 to 3 clicks (Figure 2). Further, students' and educators' use of the resource is integrated with possibilities to participate in a discussion forum.

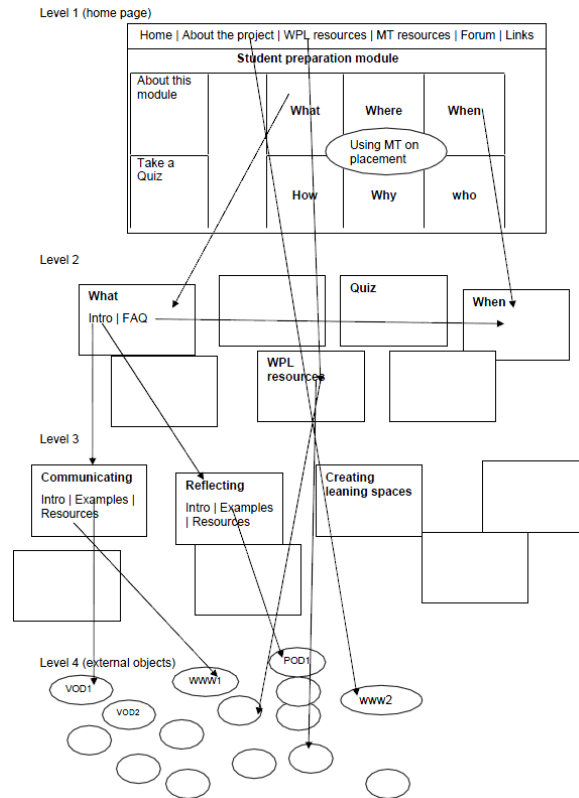


Figure 2: GPS for WPL structure

Conclusion

Though the GPS for WPL has been designed for Health and Education students to better and appropriately use mobile devices and apps on placement to enhance their learning to become a future professional, it is also hoped that, ultimately, the resource will help enhance the use of mobile technology for learning on placement for students of all disciplines.

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