



**Pen Lister**  
London Metropolitan University

0.63  
RG SCORE

## Question

### How skilled are academics in ICT? Does it vary across the disciplines?

Im interested in the potential digital divide between students and staff in relation to skills and literacy of technology. This is in the setting of preparing students for the world of work, with a '21c set of competencies'. If lecturers can't use computers or don't understand social media adequately, how can we teach students effectively?

Jan 31, 2013

#### TOPICS

transferrable skills  Social Media  ICT  Computer Literacy

Answer

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#### ALL ANSWERS (9)



**Basit Shahzad** · 8.81 · 2.19 · National University of Science and Technology

The digital divide is very obvious not only in the teachers and students but also the countries. The governments in the developed (rich) countries have managed to provide the students with the state-of-the-art technological equipment and utilities and the teachers can afford to have more there. In the poor countries the the society not only is deficient in the technology but also the governments are not flexible to strengthened the technological and educational advancements by doing more spending and developing the right policies to help the people of their nation. Ultimately its a matter of resources and right policies.



Jan 31, 2013



**Pen Lister** · London Metropolitan University

Yes you're right - the digital divide as we usually think about it is certainly still present between nations. But, it may be that thinking 'rich' nations have been able to fund great technology infrastructure is a bit of a misnomer, as tech infrastructure is often poorly thought out and poorly maintained. 'Teachers' may also not have the will or the time for any training, even if it was available.

I'm at this point interested in the gap between students (and also employers and the worksphere) who all may know their way around the web, online identity, online terminology etc, and academics who may be living in a somewhat distant past, and are not familiar at all with online identity or perceived rules and expectations of online life. (In some cases, even skills to do with using Word are very limited in staff, markedly more so than their students.) But, Im mostly interested in this in relation to communication and sharing online, as well as notions of privacy and information validity.

Feb 1, 2013



**Lenandlar Singh** · University of Guyana

We are currently working on a couple of papers that examine students vs lecturers use of social media and mobile devices. will be happy to share.

Following

Ask another question

#### SUGGESTED QUESTIONS

**What tools do you use to visualize and analyse very large complex networks?** 36

**What do you feel are the most important ways to gain a positive reputation in your field?** 10

#### CONTRIBUTORS (6)

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**Lenandlar Singh**  
University of Guyana

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#### QUESTION FOLLOWERS (9)





**Karen Norris** · Institiuid Ealaíne, Deartha & Teicneolaíochta Dhún Laoghaire

While I don't have any of my own research to contribute to this question, I think it **also worth noting the funding and position of the university/college and their view on the necessary levels of staff. I think it is very important that lecturers/teachers have a minimal level of competence with ICT and perhaps there should be continual training in this regard. Otherwise students will miss out on possible learning tools if their teacher is behind the curve.** Some interesting results could come from such a study.

Feb 16, 2013



**Pen Lister** · London Metropolitan University

I've been looking around for relevant earlier studies on this, and found some, though not a lot. One of the most relevant was "Digital literacy: An analysis of the contemporary paradigms", by Allah Nawaz and Ghulam Muhammad Kundi, Gomal University, Pakistan (published in Journal of Science and Technology Education Research Vol. 1(2), pp. 19 - 29, July 2010).

A colleague also found a relevant paper from JISC, though it's rather old (2003) - the Big Blue Connect project, from Manchester Met, available here:

[http://www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/programmes/programme\\_jos/project\\_big\\_blue.aspx](http://www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/programmes/programme_jos/project_big_blue.aspx). He also found

[http://www.jisc.ac.uk/fundingopportunities/funding\\_calls/2011/04/grant411.aspx](http://www.jisc.ac.uk/fundingopportunities/funding_calls/2011/04/grant411.aspx) which provides some relevance for topics listed and other work in this field.

I will be following up this topic in a paper for an MA dissertation, perhaps titled 'Changing Landscapes in UK Higher Education: priorities and purposes in the post information revolution'. Any other relevant research from other sources would be most welcome. I will be sharing all that I discover here and in several other questions I may post. Thanks so far for input and interest.

Modified Feb 18, 2013 by the author

Feb 18, 2013



**Camille valérien** · Université Lumière Lyon 2

The other part of the question is, even if we do have ICT high skills, have we (or do we take) the time to share it with students? I kind of have the feeling that it's not the lecturers priority to inform students and teach them how to use new technologies in their work. **Maybe, because we think that as they are "native digitals", they don't need us to teach them. But, except for the common ICT tools, are the majority of students as informed and skilled than we think they are?** (Sorry my english)

Mar 1, 2013



**Pen Lister** · London Metropolitan University

Thanks for input Camille.

I do believe, even on the sparse research evidence around, that staff are likely much more unskilled than students, certainly in basic IT and use of devices. So, while a lot of research is around concerning student digital divide/skills/access, this actually obscures a serious gap in academic staff skills in ICT. Its possible that terms like digital native/resident etc are now becoming a thing of the past, but this needs more research. My main concern is the lack of skills in staff, hence the deep lack of enthusiasm to utilise technology to enhance learning and teaching.

Mar 3, 2013



**Martin Schmettow** · 14.05 · 3.58 · Universiteit Twente

To my mind, a distinction must be made between familiarity with everyday ICT products (such as smart phones, social media, etc etc) and truly technical skills, especially programming skills.

To our experience, only a minority of students have learned programming before they enter university. One may assume that programming skills are only useful for engineering subjects, but this is not the case: for example, setting up psychological experiments or analyzing physiological data involves a lot of programming and other technical issues. In education and communication science, skills for media production are often required, by researchers and practitioners. For that particular reason we have created our own course over here, Programming for Psychologists.

Apr 15, 2013



**Pen Lister** · London Metropolitan University

Thank you Martin for your perspective here. I am in the first instance interested in 'basic' everyday IT product skills (amongst Academic staff), as even these are sadly lacking in many staff teaching sometimes highly ITC skilled students (though I acknowledge not all students are skilled in this way). In terms of more specialist skills, which are rapidly becoming much more necessary in a wider setting such as you describe, yes, there is certainly a place for approaching the teaching of coding (javascript, PHP etc) and other multimedia content creation skills (video/web development) to much wider sets and subsets of subject areas. This way at least, as we go forward, new lecturers or researchers will have much better developed approaches to technical aspects of their work.

Apr 18, 2013



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