

# Technology Enhanced Learning

UK's Teaching and Learning Research Programme

## Digital Inclusion

### What is digital inclusion?

In the context of education, digital inclusion happens or exists, when all learners, irrespective of their academic or social or cultural circumstances are able to access technologies and benefit from their use, in ways that are personally meaningful and relevant.

### Where does TEL come in?

In the TEL programme and the wider TEL community we are reviewing current practice and research in relation to digital inclusion in order to stimulate debate and identify future challenges. The debate is focused on 7 key themes (see overleaf)

The TEL Digital Inclusion strand is led by Professor Jane Seale of the University of Plymouth.

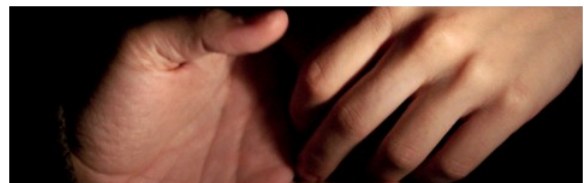


### About TEL thematic strands

Thematic strands are flexible initiatives commissioned by the programme to focus on specific areas of interest arising from one or more TEL projects and from the wider world of technology enhanced learning. The strands are organised under the heading of the themes listed above.

Under each theme there are a number of different strands led by experts in particular fields that seek to analyse the programme's work as a whole from different perspectives and look outwards to achieving impact in their field.

The findings are published by TEL in an appropriate format such as a research briefing, web resource or via an event.



### TEL themes

Inclusion is one of the five key research challenges or themes at the heart of the TEL programme.

The others are

- flexibility
- personalisation
- productivity
- research capacity building

### The Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) programme

- We aim to understand and develop the roles of digital technologies in improving the quality of learning and teaching.
- £12m in funding from ESRC/EPSRC
- Runs from 2007 to 2012
- 8 major projects, 7 development projects
- Director: Richard Noss
- [www.tlrp.org/tel](http://www.tlrp.org/tel)

### Research Briefing

A research briefing on Digital Inclusion in TEL was published in January 2010 and is available electronically or in hard copy via the website [www.tlrp.org/tel](http://www.tlrp.org/tel)

### Forum

A web forum was set up to consult the wider TEL world outside the programme about digital inclusion, as part of TEL's mission to be a resource for the UK research world in general. Comments were used to inform the writing of the briefing.

### Digital Inclusion Events

A conference was held in summer 2010 with representatives from the eight TEL projects to look at how each project could address digital inclusion issues and how project findings could be used to help achieve greater digital inclusion.

## TEL Digital Inclusion themes

### Reach

Why are some learners still not benefiting from technology? How can we increase our understanding of the social and structural barriers to digital inclusion that continue to exist despite improvements in provision of and access to technology?

### Impact

How do we define digital inclusion so that:  
i) digital inclusion can be measured  
ii) successful digital inclusion practices can be evaluated in ways that are meaningful to all stakeholders, including learners?

### Sustainability

How can the individual practices that support digital inclusion become embedded in wider structures and systems to enhance the likelihood of the benefits of digital inclusion being long term rather than short-term? What are the best ways to develop and support the digital inclusion practices of those who support technology use by excluded or marginalised learners?

### Complexity & Fluidity

How might TEL design and development be informed or enhanced by a greater understanding of the different kinds of use and non-use that have been identified by researching the activities, experiences and motivations of those learners that are identified as digitally excluded?

### Personalisation

What motivates those learners identified as marginalised or excluded to want to access and use technology and what are the factors that influence this motivation?

### Mediation

How can we design technologies so that they facilitate the relationship between learners, teachers and the wider community? How can technologies help us better understand this relationship to inform design for learning?

### Choice, Agency And Empowerment

Are some approaches to designing and developing technology or technology enhanced learning more likely than others to enhance the agency and empowerment of marginalised learners?

