Understanding student digital literacies: reflecting on differences, divides, visitors and residents

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Student Ambassadors for Digital Literacy (SADL)

- Undergraduate
- Collaborative
- Peer support

Completed 3 years

Project → Programme
SADL aims

- To **understand** students’ existing digital and information literacy (DIL) skills.
- To explore how best to **support students** to improve these skills and to provide **peer support**.
Programme overview

SADL Welcome event
Workshop 1: Finding and evaluating information
Workshop 2: Academic practices: reading and research
Workshop 3: Managing and sharing information
Workshop 4: Your digital footprint
SADL Celebration

All resources on the project website: http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/lsesadl/resources/
Group work
Workshop activities

Dealing with assignments

Managing information
SADL Senior Ambassadors

- Completed SADL in a previous year
- Work alongside staff
- Give input into workshop content
- Guide and support students in workshops
- Lead student projects
SADL: the impact on students

“I am glad I joined SADL because I wouldn't have known anything about copyright or any qualitative skills if I didn't. So in terms of study skills that really helped me a lot like research and managing information and things. It helped me through my second year.”

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ALaUhlWRnTg
Evaluation – Impact on students

Digital & Information Literacy skills

+ Transferability • Study • Personal lives • Employability
+ Referencing skills • Using new apps • Blogging • Managing their digital identity • Using LinkedIn effectively
  
− some expected more technical skills; e.g. Excel, coding

More than ‘tech’ skills

+ Public speaking • Presentation skills • Confidence • Collaborative working
Evaluation – Impact on the SADL team

Significant impact on Senior Ambassadors

+ Leadership skills • Teaching skills • Managing projects
+ ‘How SADL got me hired’

Important staff development

+ Greater level of engagement with UGs
+ New teaching methods and approaches
Evaluation – value of collaboration

Value of collaborative approach to teaching

+ Friendly, informal approach, peer support and friendships
− Some students wanted more teaching / less discussions

Student project had mixed responses

− Need for greater consistency as dependent on seniors
− Student engagement and effort varied considerably
Collaboration in action
Improving and enhancing SADL

- Selling SADL in the right way is crucial
- Catering to different levels of knowledge and interests: entrepreneurs vs academic skills
- What is an ambassador and how can they provide peer support in year 1?
- Run sessions at different times: evenings?
- Make project more relevant and embedded
- Engage more staff with the programme’s aims
Visitors and residents

Students’ online engagement

- **Institutional** tools – mostly used as *visitors*
- **Social media** apps – mostly used as *residents*
  – e.g. Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube, Skype
- Less likely to use the same app for both personal & academic life

How can social media apps be used for academic purposes to encourage engagement?
Engaging with SADL

visitor

resident
Biggest challenges in 2016/17

- Scaling up and broadening the programme: LSE Life
- Developing the peer learning aspects of SADL to empower students
- Keeping it student-led and student focused
- Maintaining the SADL community
Any questions?

Follow the SADL Story!
blogs.lse.ac.uk/lsesadl
@LSESADL
Further reading


LSE SADL Project website and resources (2014) Available at: [http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/lsesadl/resources](http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/lsesadl/resources)


Jisc (2015) Developing successful staff-student partnerships. [https://www.jisc.ac.uk/guides/developing-successful-staff-student-partnerships](https://www.jisc.ac.uk/guides/developing-successful-staff-student-partnerships)


Bell, Maria and Moon, Darren and Secker, Jane (2012) *Undergraduate support at LSE: the ANCIL report*. The London School of Economics and Political Science, London, UK. Available at: [http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/48058/](http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/48058/)