

# FAR, FAR AWAY:

## BRIDGING THE DISTANCE WITH DIGITAL SKILLS

A UK engagement survey from 2021 has found that student engagement and collaboration has dropped due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. With distanced and online learning in place, it is now more vital than ever to rely on digital skills and platforms.

As a university with students from all different backgrounds and educational experiences, everyone has something new to bring to the table so that we can learn from each other. It is important to share digital skills and platforms which are both straightforward and accessible to all.

Technology now has an even more essential role in education than ever for both students and teachers alike. What digital skills are essential and accessible for our online and distanced learning? And how can we best collaborate with students from a distance, and from different backgrounds and experiences? Ultimately, which digital skills can help us to bridge distances?

Google Docs is an essential platform for group work. It provides constant up-to-date access to files which can be shared with multiple users at once. You can work from the comfort of your own home while actively engaging with your group, making collaborative work both efficient and safe.

WhatsApp is a must-have social media platform for communicating amongst fellow students online. Group chats can be made amongst classes so students can discuss assignments or lectures, and it can act as an efficient platform for direct communication to and from your student representatives.

Google Scholar and Google Books are essential sites for research. No matter what subject you're studying, there is a huge variety of scholarly literature at your fingertips. They are both very straightforward sites to use, and can be very helpful if you can't make it to the library.

YouTube is an essential platform when you're doing anything new. Whether you need to know how to use photoshop, or how to convert a file to a PDF, YouTube tutorials have you covered. International students have found it especially useful, with some sharing English language videos with each other.

Statista is a huge data platform which provides an enormous amount of sources for essay research. It is very simple to use - you simply search for the data you'd like to find, and it will provide you with a whole list of results to look through and use in your research.

