Mobile Reflections JISC Elevator Project – Briefing for Participants

Thank you for taking part in the project, and I hope that you will find it useful as a way of focusing on your learning or practice over the next few weeks.

We want to learn from how you use mobile technology to reflect, so I don't want to be too prescriptive. Think of yourself very much as a co-researcher.

Any time from now, you can start to capture your reflections using a mobile device. These mini-reflections may be photos or videos. You might see something, or be somewhere that you want to remember, and just take a quick photo. Or you might have an idea or a sudden realisation – so just speak it into your camera on video setting, whilst pointing the camera at something (it doesn't have to be pointed at you). The place that you are, and the tone of your voice, will add extra 'data' when you come to review your reflections later.

Before you start, you do need to do some quick 'tests' using your mobile device.

Test out your Technology

Video Orientation: Check how you need to orientate the phone to get the video the right way up. To do this:-

a) Record a brief video with your phone held upright, then on its sides. Describe as you are videoing how you are holding the camera
b) Download the video files onto your computer, and view them. You will see straight away which one is the right way up!
c) Make a note of how you were holding the phone, and remember to hold it this way when you are recording your videos. Otherwise you can end up with sideways (or upside down) videos.

   For example, I'm using an iPhone 3GS, and I've found that I need to orientate the camera to landscape (on its side), with the camera at the top.

Voice Volume: Check how well your voice is recorded on your device, and how near you need to hold it to capture your voice adequately. Again, you can do this by recording test videos, downloading the files, and playing them back on your computer. With my iPhone, I've found that I need to be quite close to it.

Save your Data

It would be a good idea for you to set up a folder on your PC, and download your digital files (videos and images) to this every week or so to keep them safe. We will be using these later.

Video Editing Workshop

During the week of 9th – 13th July, we will be running an online workshop to teach you how to use Windows Live Moviemaker to create a reflective digital story from the digital files that you've gathered. The workshop will be an online space that you can access all week (like a VLE). We will also aim to run a 'chat' type live session to discuss experiences and share our reflections. I'll send more detail on this nearer the time.

Keeping in Touch

To help you to focus on capturing your reflections (it's easy to forget when you're busy!) I will email you once a week with some suggested reflection questions (you can ignore these if you choose; you don't have to answer them). With that email, I will link to a blog post on the Digitalis website, and ask you to post a very quick comment. This will only take a minute or so.

Help and Support

If you have any questions at all, technical or otherwise, email me c.kirk@leeds.ac.uk and I'll do my best to help. You can also find me on Twitter – @carolekirk.

Payment

Once the workshop has finished, we will arrange to pay you £70 for your participation.

Questions

It would be helpful if you could answer the following questions to help me plan the project, and to help you think about how to get the best out of it:-

- What mobile device are you planning to use? Do you need to borrow a Flip camera?
- What are your objectives for this project? e.g. What skills do you want to learn? Is there anything in particular that you want to focus your reflections upon?
- If you are using this to help develop a creative project, can you briefly describe the project?
- Do you maintain a blog or ePortfolio, or use Twitter? (It's fine if you don't!)
- What technical (or any other) support do you think you might need?