AN INSTITUTION WIDE COLLABORATION TO HARNESS ICT FOR ACCESSIBLE LEARNING

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ABSTRACT

Access to higher learning is life-changing and the integration of information and communication technology should aim to afford genuinely transformative learning experiences to greater numbers of diverse students through promotion of an inclusive learning environment. Globally, between 15 - 20% of students are estimated to have a language based learning difference (International Dyslexia Association, 2016), therefore leadership that enables inclusive digital practice within higher education can have a significant impact on both the individual and the community.

Internationally, there is an ever increasing expectation that higher education institutions deliver technology enhanced learning experiences. This provides an opportunity to harness the affordances of technology to offer personalised and accessible learning. There is a global body of knowledge on the benefits of providing accessible learning environments, and frameworks for implementations within technology enhanced curriculum (Centre for Applied Science and Technology: Universal Design for Learning; The European Agency for ICT; G3ICT: The Global Initiative for ICT's; The DO-IT Centre; Web Content Accessibility Guidelines).

This paper outlines the rationale and roadmap for an initiative undertaken at RMIT Vietnam to ensure the provision of accessible education. The RMIT Access initiative aims to provide a curriculum which is by default accessible to students with a broad range of learning approaches and preferences, including learning differences and disabilities, and second language learners. The aim is to demonstrate international best practice in fostering a digitally inclusive learning environment through provision of accessible content and teaching materials.