

Happy Holidays 2020

New job, new skills and more exciting technology #23ThingsEdUni

I'm now continuing my career progression into supporting virtual learning environments with my new role as Learning Technology Support Officer with Education Design and Engagement (EDE).

The new position is an ideal opportunity for me to apply my digital and practical skills as well as my technical knowledge in supporting users and technology within teaching and learning environments at the University.

Having only started on Monday I feel I will fit in very well as I'm already seeing similarities to the role from my previous secondment with Digital Learning Applications and Media (DLAM). I'm pleased also to find out that I will still have some interaction with my DLAM colleagues – working with them on certain virtual tools that are in use.

I'm joined, as a newbie to EDE, with four other new colleagues who all come from very different professional backgrounds. I

find this quite exciting as it shows how diverse the position is going to be in the ever-changing world of learning technology.

It's great to go through the induction and training process as a group, where we are able to support each other and work through tasks. As we aren't in the office, our regular Team catch-ups are a great sanity check and a place to decompress after all the information that is being presented to us. We have also been made to feel very welcome and are gradually being introduced to new services and training.

I have just recently started the "23 Things List" – this is the University's digital knowledge program that is self-directed with the purpose of exposing me to a range of digital tools to help with my personal and professional development. Similar to LinkedIn Learning, I like how you are able to take the training and tasks at your own pace. By joining this program I'm hoping to strengthen my digital skills and even learn some new ones! I've just completed 'Thing 1 – Introduction' and 'Thing 2 – Blogging' (hence the new post).

Having not much of a presence on social media (something I'm working on – see shameless plug: [my LinkedIn profile](#)) I wasn't aware of the University's 'Social Media Guidelines for Staff and Researchers'. I do however find it useful to reference as there is a lot more to a social media presence than you might think!

"Thing 3" and "Thing 4" will cover Digital Footprint and Security – a couple of great topics to add to my skill set!

Working from home is working for me.

Now that I have been working from home for the last four months, I have started to notice a few things both positive and negative – but mostly working from home is working for me.

I'm quite fortunate that I have been able to set up a reasonably comfy temporary office where I can still separate home life from work. I'm also lucky to have a decent size garden so I can escape from the office on a sunny day and spend some time outside cutting the grass or tending to our fruit and veg. I do have a great view from my makeshift office of the garden and have noticed the wildlife a bit more. With the countless number of little birds, a family of woodpeckers, the acrobatic squirrels and the resident fox all very active throughout the day. It's this that has made me appreciate my home a bit more and my surrounding areas that I have had more time to explore.

Not having to commute has saved me a lot more time in the day for activities that I want to do. It has also saved me a bit of money plus the fact I'm not spending as much eating out for lunch or the post work pints. Overall, I believe I have been more productive and have learned a lot more from my secondment in DLAM and my digital skills training. This has now helped me into my new role of Learning Technology Support Officer that I will be starting in August.

There are however a few negative things I have noticed. Firstly, my broadband speed is terrible! This isn't great when your job revolves around being online. Thankfully, fiber is on its way, so I just have to put up with it for a little longer.

Another negative is that I'm not moving as much during the day. When I was back in the office I was out and about on campus going to meetings and visiting teaching spaces. I was averaging 15000 steps in the day but now my Garmin is happy enough if I make it out of bed in the morning!

I'm also missing interactions with my colleagues where you can see how they are getting on, how their weekend was or even quickly work through an issue that a user is having. Now it's a Teams message or a scheduled video call between other meetings.

I was in the office today, however, conducting one of my final duties with LST and it was good to get back on campus. It was strange to work in a computer lab without any students to dodge around whilst trying to fix PCs. The area has been set up well with social distancing measures, one-way traffic and hand sanitizer stations but it did seem quite eerie with the lack of staff and students.

It looks like I will be home working for a bit longer than most of my LST colleagues. It would have been nice to meet up with them before I finished but I guess it will have to wait. I'm quite excited to see how hybrid teaching will look for semester one and I'm looking forward to the challenges it brings. I'm also looking forward to meeting my new colleagues

and starting my new role as I continue to progress in my career supporting learning technologies.



Photo of garden SW



Photo of garden NW