# Transition Out ?

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## Introduction and Overview

Transition Out (TO?) is a six month intensive investigation funded as part of the URB@N project looking at how students want to use (or are already using) technology which will assist as they look towards completing their course and moving into employment or other future opportunities. This could be any type of technology ranging from mobile devices, social networking and cloud services. Students may not realise that the activities they are doing will assist with their transitions - they might be actively collaborating with peers (Ellison et al, 2007), using time management or planning tools, or generally enhancing their skills and experience using a range of technology. The work builds from the LLIDA (JISC, 2009) and SLiDA (JISC, 2010) investigation of supporting learners in a digital age.

TO? is identifying what works well for students, but also barriers that stop them from using the technology or precautions to take (Rossi, 2011). It is also gathering their thoughts on how we might be able to better promote technology to support the transition process (i.e. what training, support resources or services would they find most helpful).

## Key Results (n=214)

- Word processing (85%) and email (88%) are the most popular technologies to support students as they leave the institution.
- Students under the age of 30 are more likely to use technology than those over this age (sig < 0.05)
- Males are tending to use technology to find future opportunities more than females (sig <0.05)
- 66% had suffered from a lack of knowledge / confidence with the use of technology, however 22% would not seek out resources supplied by the University to help them improve their skills
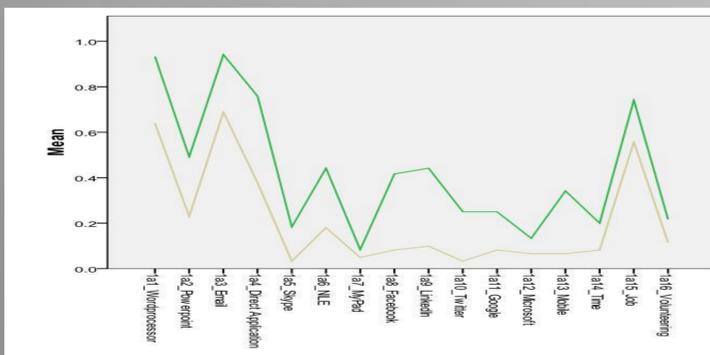


Chart showing how students and alumni over the age of 30 tend to use technology less than those under 30.

> I use MyPad to record what I'm doing in my working life and in my student life.. I can use that to update my CV or think about it when I'm applying for jobs...

> I think students need to be a lot more aware of what people can and can't see on FaceBook

> I always use my university email address to contact potential employers... to seem more professional

> I set up my email account on my iPhone, so every time I receive the email I can check it immediately, ......so I won't lose any opportunity

## Conclusion

From the data which has been gathered so far, teams which support students (e.g. Careers and Library) will be able to refine their support, engagement and provision. Those involved in the development and running of courses will be provided with further guidance and support to consider how development of the digital literacy of the cohort will impact on their ability to gain future opportunities on leaving. Provision should be integrated into the student experience rather than being seen as a bolt-on.

## 5 Key Messages For Students

1. Lock down your Facebook and Twitter accounts! Employers will search for you, make sure they can only see what you want them to – privacy settings are a must!
2. Get into Social Media – Open a LinkedIn Account and professionalise your Facebook! This is the 'new' job search, and it works!
3. Use the support services whilst you are here, have a problem with psychometric testing or need help on time management / planning ? Go and see Careers
4. Consider which email address you use to contact employers – KittyKatLOL@me.com is not going to give the best first impression!
5. Make use of MyPad or alternative portfolio system! Employers want evidence of your experience, and this is a great way to document what you do, as you do it, to then include in your CV.  If you go on a placement this is a tool which could help you to make the most of your experience.

## References

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