

BILETA: "To Infinity and Beyond: Law and Technology in Harmony?"  
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Category: E-learning

## **E-learning, M-learning, Pods and Vods: A legal education study**

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There is an assumption that 'all ICT is good ICT', considering the use of learning technologies as a powerful stimulus for improving teaching, learning and assessment.<sup>2</sup>

As the university campus moves away from 'bricks and mortar' to 'clicks and mortar' Selwyn is critical of what he believes to be the decidedly non-transformatory nature of formal ICT use in contemporary HE.<sup>3</sup> There is an increasing concern that 'commentators are often driven by assumptions of the allure of new media for young people rather than empirical evidence'.<sup>4</sup> As Selwyn and Gorard rightly point out 'analysis of participation data [shows] that access to ICT does not, in itself, make people anymore likely to participate in education and (re)engage with learning. We know that access to ICT continues to be largely patterned according to long-term pre-existing social, economic and educational factors'.<sup>5</sup> This suggests that we must take into account students' lived experiences of engaging with educational technologies. Research shows that students only perceive ICT as useful if it can be integrated into their daily lives.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> T. Goodison, The implementation of e-learning in higher education in the United Kingdom: the road ahead, *Higher Education in Europe* 26 (2) (2001), pp. 247–262.

<sup>3</sup> Selwyn, N. The use of computer technology in university teaching and learning: a critical perspective. *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning* 23 (2), pp. 83-94 at p84.

<sup>4</sup> Selwyn, N. Developing the technological imagination: theorising the social shaping and consequences of new technologies, paper presented to *ESRC seminar series: 'The educational and social impact of new technologies on young people'* University of Oxford, March 2008 available at [http://www.education.ox.ac.uk/esrcseries/uploaded/08\\_0314%20ESRC%20report\\_web.pdf](http://www.education.ox.ac.uk/esrcseries/uploaded/08_0314%20ESRC%20report_web.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Selwyn, N., Gorard, S. Reality bytes: examining the rhetoric of widening educational participation via ICT, *British Journal of Educational Technology* 34 (2) (2003) pp. 169-181 at p177.

<sup>6</sup> Lee, M. J. W., Chan, A. Reducing the Effects of Isolation and Promoting Inclusivity for Distance Learners through Podcasting. *Turkish Online Journal of Distance Education* 8 (1) (2007) available at [http://tojde.anadolu.edu.tr/tojde25/articles/Article\\_7.htm](http://tojde.anadolu.edu.tr/tojde25/articles/Article_7.htm)

In October 2008, Chris Hull and Dr Victoria Armstrong<sup>7</sup> began an empirical study aiming to evaluate the use of pod/vodcasts and other mobile technology as a tool for learning to try to ascertain in what ways students make use of it, for what purposes, perceived benefits, and how it may have helped students' understanding of a topic (the pedagogical value).

In addition the study considers the ways in which students use and think about mobile technologies in the context of their studies, within the formal (university) and informal (home) contexts. This highlights the social nature of learning, and examining the relationship between student uses of mobile technologies and other forms of student engagement. (socio-cultural dimensions).

This first review will look at the nature of the study, the technology used and will give some preliminary findings.

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