

Do we use the VLE effectively to innovate/transform learning in creative arts?



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A photograph of a silver Apple iMac computer monitor. The screen displays a webpage with a collage of images: a group of students in a classroom, a person working on a mechanical part, and a close-up of a person's face. Below the images, the text 'Engineering' is prominently displayed, followed by 'Electronic Communications, Mechanical, Manufacturing' in a smaller font. The monitor is on a desk, and a person's hand holding a purple pen is visible in the bottom right corner.

Engineering
Electronic Communications, Mechanical, Manufacturing

Jess Power and Vidya Kannara

Discussion points:



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- Why in certain high practice-based subject minimum use of the VLE may be deemed best practice?
- Why practice-based subjects in creative arts utilise less Web 2.0 functions within VLE?
- Knowledge gaps and potential barriers for using VLE
- Developing a rich environment for learning within practice based subjects: embedding, enhancing and supporting Technology Enhanced Learning.

- UK HE Landscape - Technology
- Student expectations “anywhere anytime”
- HEI investments in TEL
- Use of technology can transform the learning experience.
- Blended learning: traditional/e-learning
- VLE use is varied – Challenge
- Understand technical choices

Identify knowledge gaps in digital literacy within creative arts & humanities & establish suitable strategies to close them.

- Analyse the level and type of e-learning opportunities provided across a range of undergraduate courses in creative arts & humanities.
- Identify examples of good practice in relation to technology blended teaching & learning within the VLE.
- Develop, implement & evaluate strategies to support technology enhanced blended learning in creative arts & humanities.

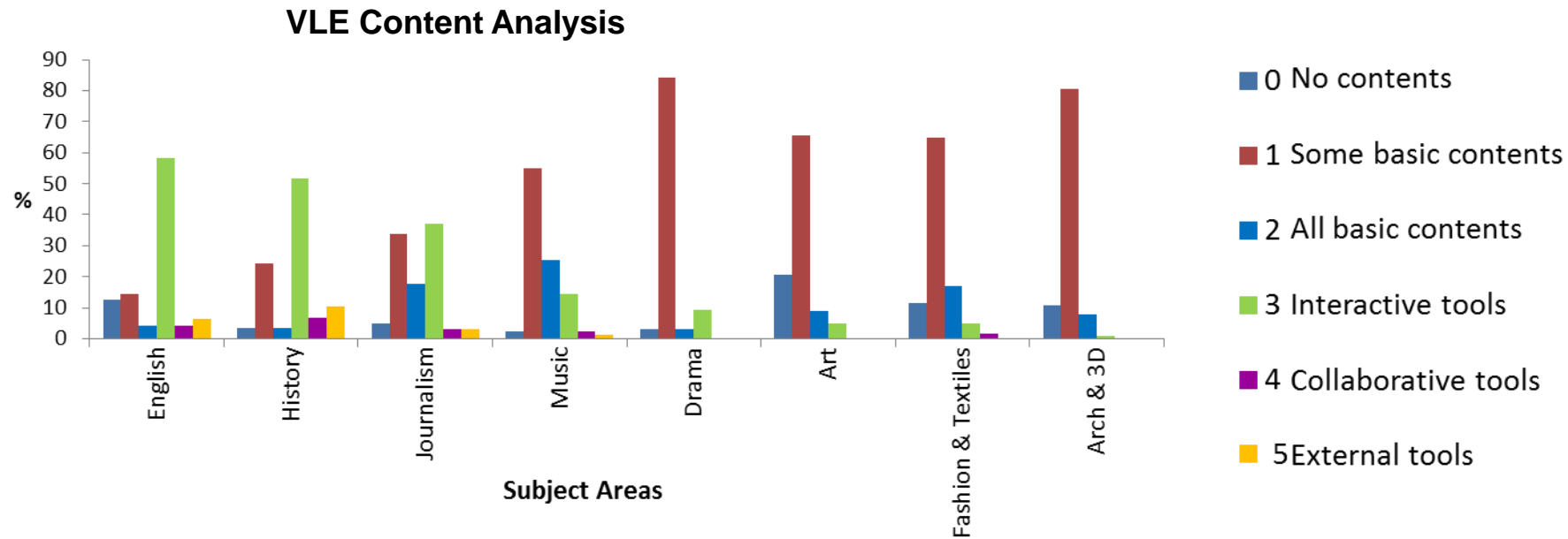
School Questionnaire

- There is some appetite for an audit standardisation.
- A culture change is required to make meaningful use of the data.
- Need to use audit data to develop/inform T&L strategy.
- Impact of staff digital literacy unclear in terms of student learning.
- In certain high practical based subjects minimum use of the VLE may be best practice.

Content Analysis - mapping

- Most UK institutions have developed digital literacy policies and guidelines.
 - Framework to promote digital literacy
 - Minimum compliance
 - Staff self-evaluation to encourage on-line provision
- Criteria for auditing VLE is limited – literature
- Gap in how audit data feeds into
 - Institutional strategy
 - Enhanced student learning
 - Pedagogical good practice
 - Technical development / innovation

Findings from the VLE Audit



- Practical based subjects have got similar profiles from the grading criteria.
- Practical based subjects utilise UniLearn less.

Q: What are the barriers/reasons?

Q: Do we require different approaches to supporting TEL for practical based courses?

Findings from the Staff Questionnaire

- 41% used to a basic level.
- 21% do not organise in a way for students to navigate.
- 71% don't consider the VLE in module design.
- 65% stated that the VLE should be considered at AE. 47% at SAVP.
- VLE is a technical solution as opposed to a pedagogical innovation.
- 65% say there is no incentive to improve digital literacy.
- VLE Blended learning is good practice but 35% say that the technology used by the University was not supporting best practice.
- 65% could identify pedagogical reasons for using the VLE.
- Two staff state the VLE does not enhance learning – (lecturers can respond to the moment in class.)
- Barriers to use were identified to be clunky and clumsy.
- 12% of staff stated that they would only engage when forced to, and a further 18% stated it was not their responsibility to keep up to date.
- Mixed response regarding the future of the VLE.

Focus Group Themes

- Good Practice in E&M Technology.
- Knowledge Gaps in Engagement and Use.
- Mechanisms for Embedding and Enhancing Learning.

Barriers

- Navigation/interface
- Technology competence
- Student related
- Time

Factors affecting use TEL

- Nature of course
- Better systems
- Format of course

So What – model for ADA?



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- Navigation and visual interface could be improved (reduce repository model)
- Do we all need to be technology experts?
- What is best practice in TEL? – ease of locating resources
- We don't want to discourage staff from using other platforms/interfaces? – links in VLE (everything is in one place)
- Expert in school to build (showcase)
- Playing to our strengths results in better design
- VLE is the central port of call, organised, visually appealing

- VLE as the central point to access all teaching and learning content
- Embed or direct students to external content
- Clear and simple interface
- Work on a various devices (mobiles, tablets and computers)
- VLE shouldn't try to do everything – blended learning
- Maintaining VLE spaces should be easy
- Technology expert to build the visual interface and improve navigation

Pilot VLE Showcase Project:

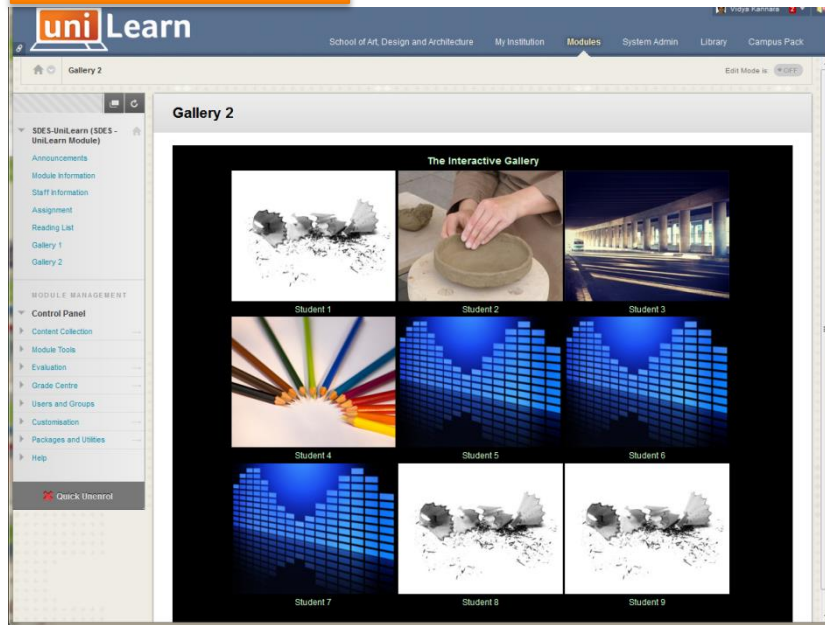
- Intern and a student consultant
- Generic module (7 courses)
- Updates regularly by various tutors
- Reviewed this module

*Aesthetics, navigation, structure of information,
consistency, intuitive*

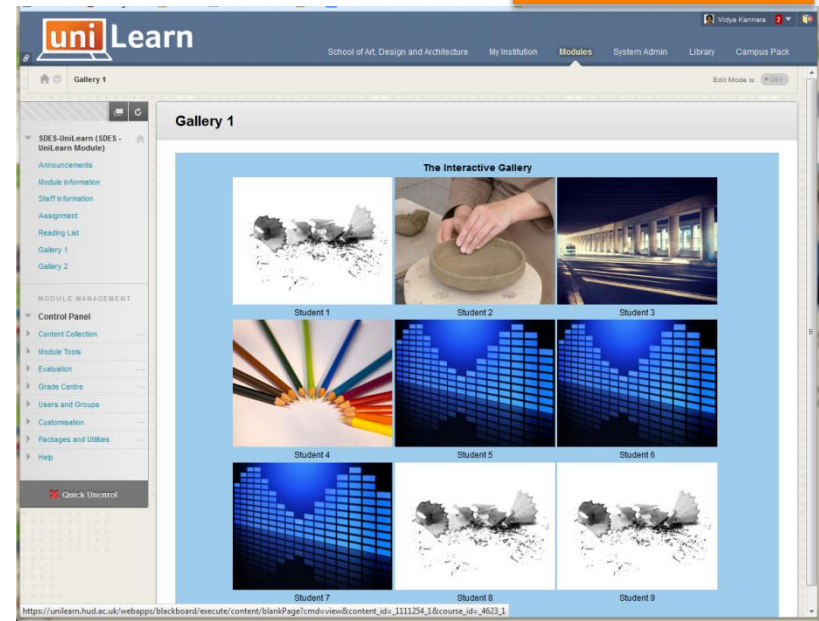
- Different fonts,
- different colours,
- Navigation not easy - organisation, content in different places
- Ground rules need establishing, ownership

Gallery to showcase student work

Prototype 1



Prototype 2

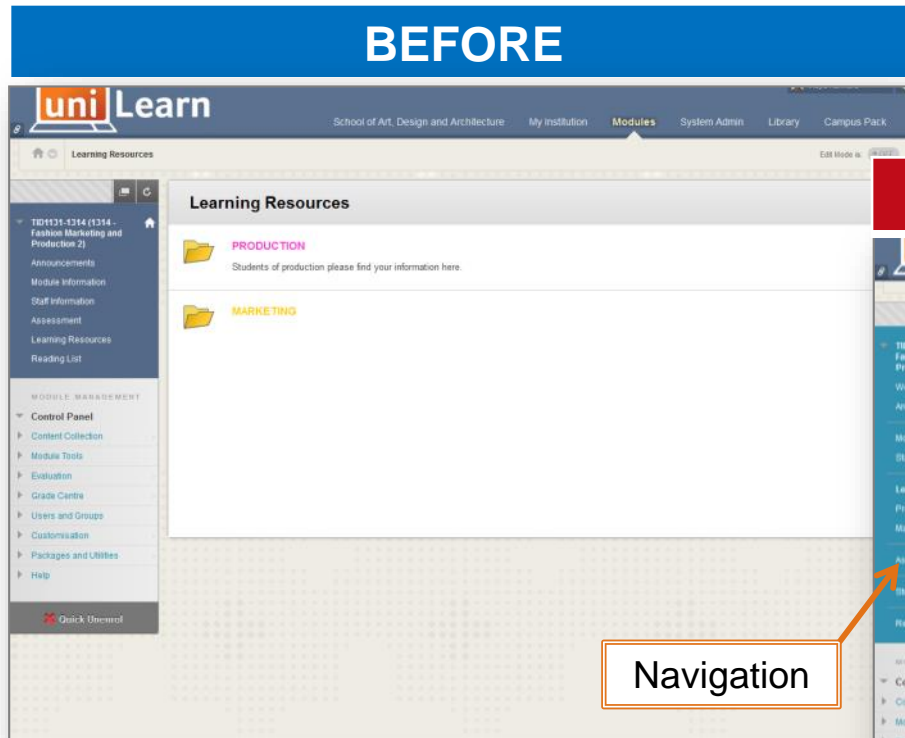


Paul Blindell (Interior Design Course)

“The development of a new image interface allowed us to visualise the potential for greater impact and reflection within the VLE.

Module 1: before and after enhancement

BEFORE



uniLearn

School of Art, Design and Architecture My Institution Modules System Admin Library Campus Pack

Learning Resources

Learning Resources

PRODUCTION
Students of production please find your information here.

MARKETING

MODULE MANAGEMENT

Control Panel

Content Collection

Module Tools

Evaluation

Grade Centre

Users and Groups

Customisation

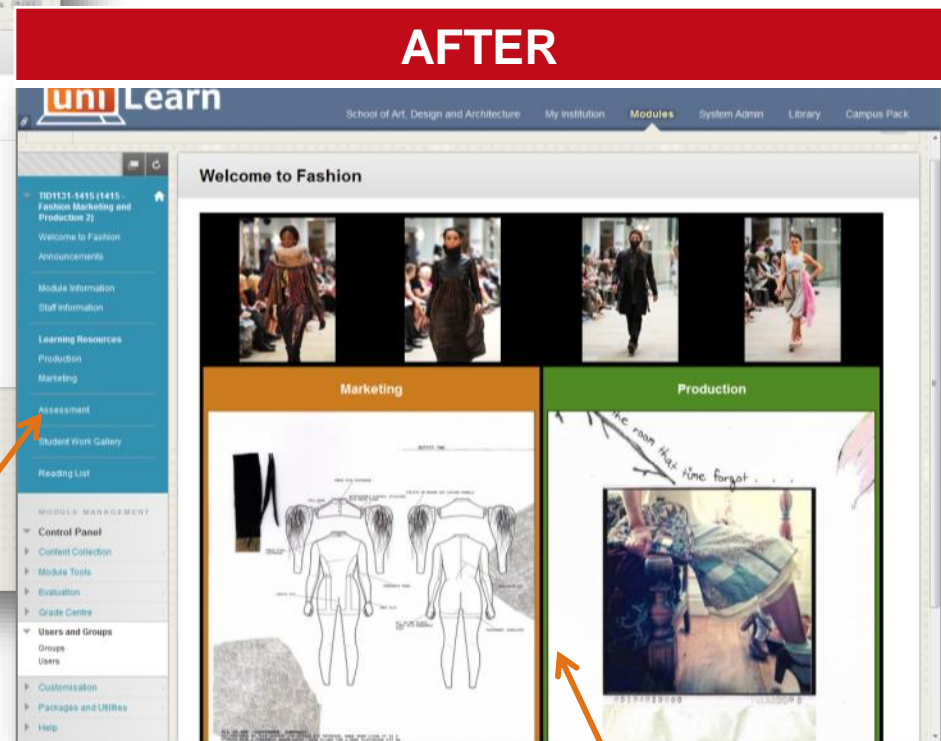
Packages and Utilities

Help

Quick Overview

Navigation

AFTER



uniLearn

School of Art, Design and Architecture My Institution Modules System Admin Library Campus Pack

Welcome to Fashion

Marketing

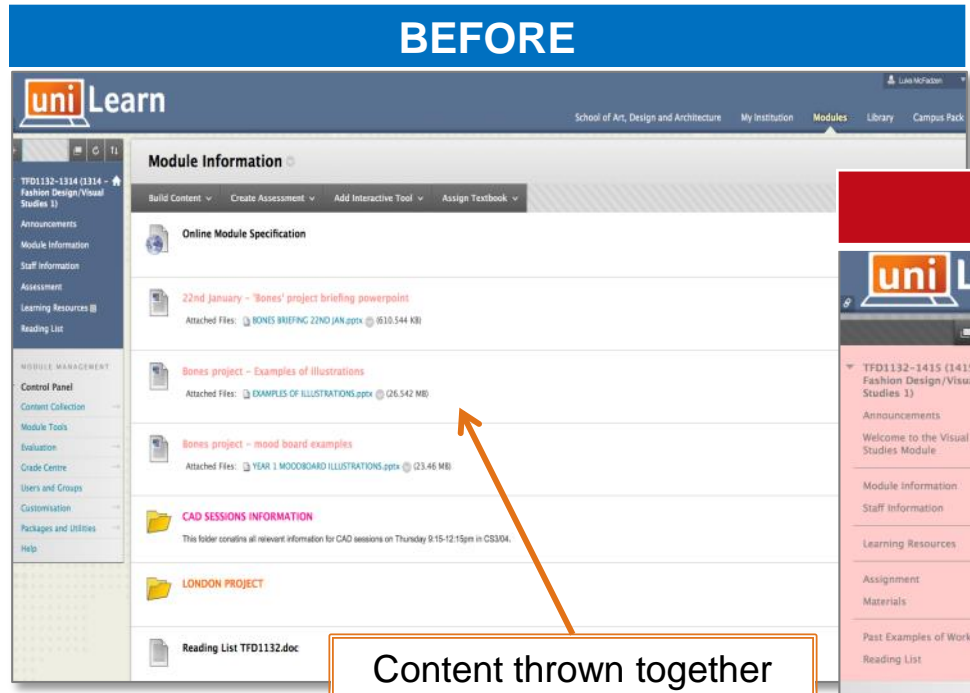
Production

Assessment

Split between the areas of the module

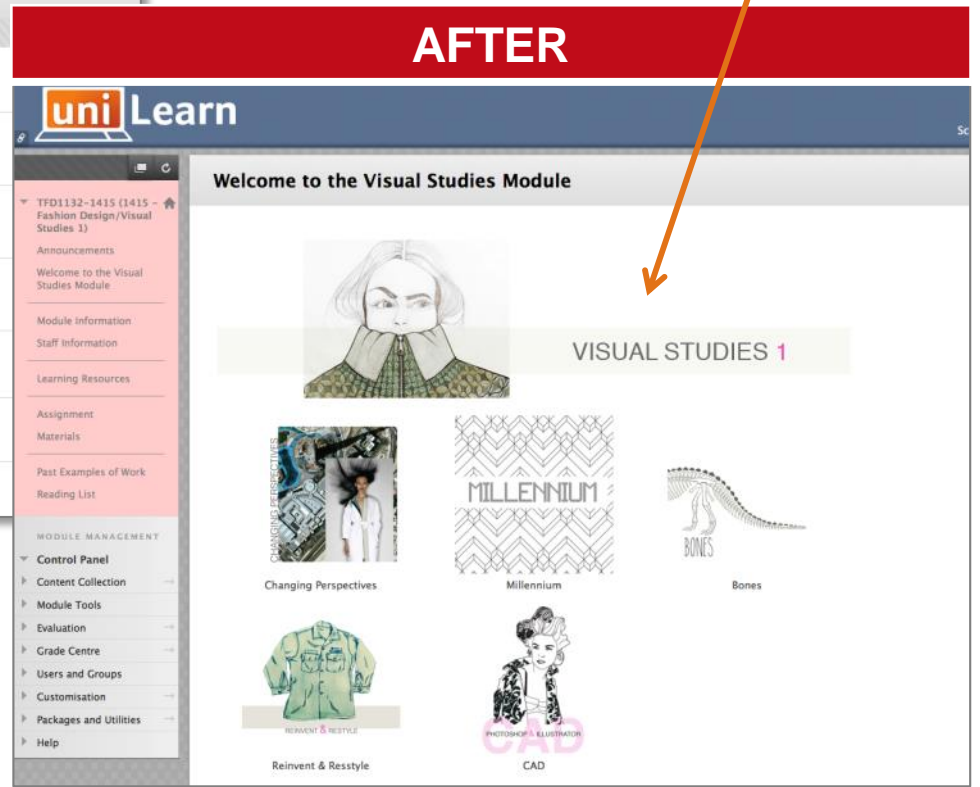
Module 2: before and after enhancement

BEFORE

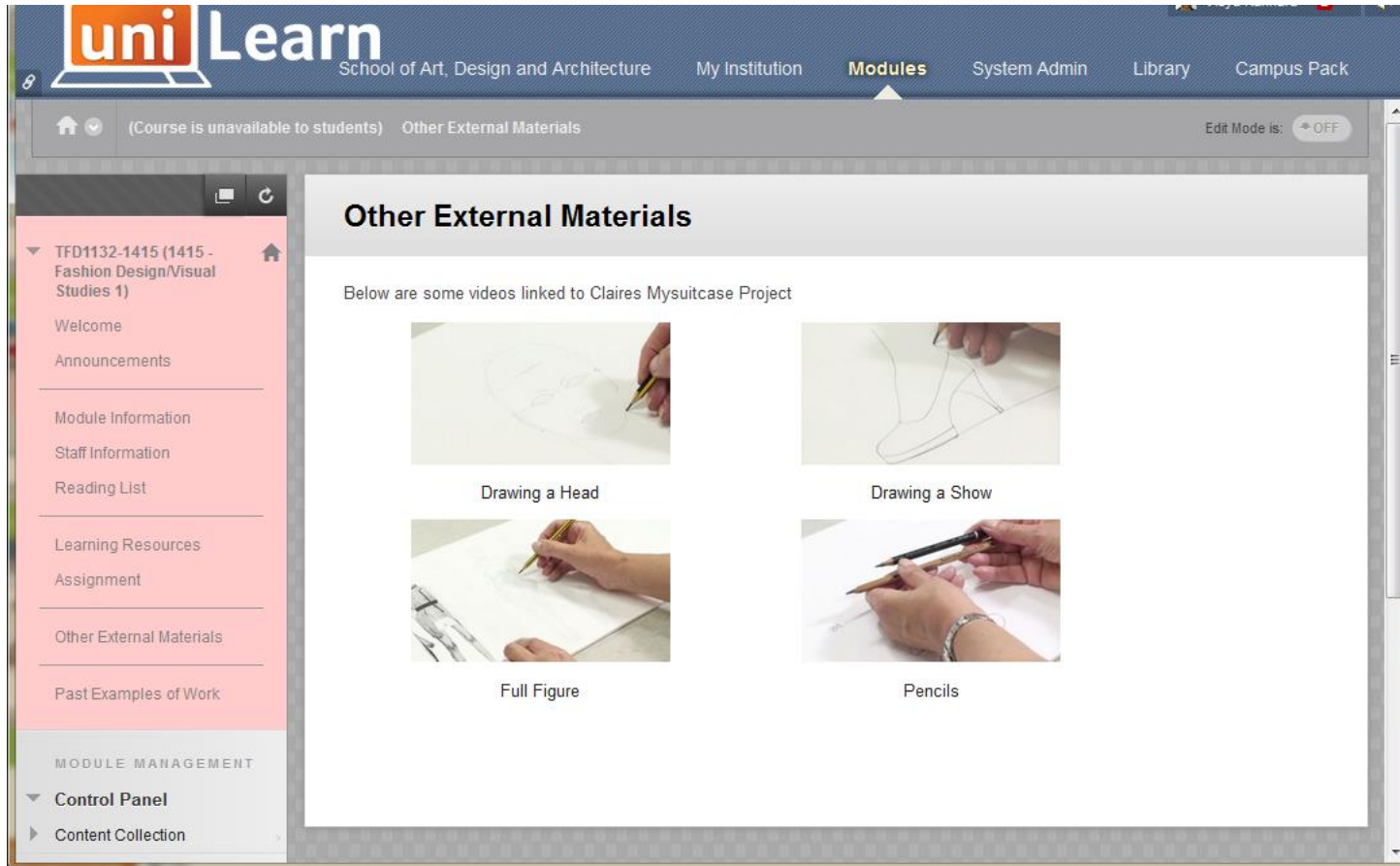


Content grouped together logically

AFTER



Module 2 visual interface for help videos



The screenshot displays the uniLearn interface for the 'Fashion Design/Visual Studies 1' module. The top navigation bar includes 'uniLearn', 'School of Art, Design and Architecture', 'My Institution', 'Modules', 'System Admin', 'Library', and 'Campus Pack'. A secondary bar shows '(Course is unavailable to students) Other External Materials' and 'Edit Mode is: OFF'. The left sidebar lists navigation options: Welcome, Announcements, Module Information, Staff Information, Reading List, Learning Resources, Assignment, Other External Materials, and Past Examples of Work. The main content area is titled 'Other External Materials' and contains the text 'Below are some videos linked to Claires Mysuitcase Project'. It features four video thumbnails: 'Drawing a Head', 'Drawing a Show', 'Full Figure', and 'Pencils'.

Benefits to Staff



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I've been really encouraged by the improvements made to the module (Marketing and Production), it's opened up new ideas that I would not have thought of and having someone there to work on the module has given me an opportunity to look over the module while having new ideas that could be used for further modules
– Claire Evans



Students are constantly using software on their phones and tablets. The module page for Fashion Design was clunky, needed to have a clearer interface and some consistency in the navigation. The new gallery supports student's learning, while the module visual appearance looks clear and is user-friendly. This project has allowed me to consider new areas of the design module and organising the information already on there

– Kathryn Brennand



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Questions





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Special thanks!

Cath Ellis and Ben Fisher from MHM

Jonathan Marsh

Luke McFadzen

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