[X]POSITION VOLUME 9: FOREWORD

[X]position Editorial Team

We are delighted to introduce our first ever themed issue of [X]position, entitled An Evolving Digital World. [X]position is a pioneering peer-reviewed undergraduate journal that supports our students through the process of writing and publishing their research.

The digital world has been a site of rapid advancement in recent years, a fact that has been starkly apparent to students required to adapt to such changes over the course of their degrees. This volume of the journal provided a platform for our authors to engage critically with the theme in a variety of different formats, and we are thrilled to be publishing pieces of work from students across all four Colleges.

As an editorial team, we felt that this theme was very pertinent for a 2025 publication: responding to the expansion of Generative AI and its impact on students by exploring changes to teaching and assessment practice has been only one facet of the Higher Education sector's evolving discussion around the importance of digital literacies. In this foreword, we are keen to highlight the importance of being digitally literate in a digital-forward world and to provide some context around the work being carried out in the digital literacies space.

In 2021, the BBC reported that the UK is heading towards a catastrophic digital skill shortage disaster (Russon & Hooker, 2021). Building on this, in education it is becoming increasingly difficult to make the case for a clear distinction between academic literacies and digital literacies as the two are becoming increasingly intertwined. The age of the digital native has been and gone (Ng, 2012), and it is becoming increasingly clear that while many of our students have had a lifelong relationship with the digital world that differs from previous generations, this does not necessarily include the digital literacies around which university study and working life are built (Struan & Diver, 2024, p.246). Therefore, we feel it is of paramount importance to ensure that our students are offered the opportunity to engage critically with themes around digital literacies and their perceived effects. This volume of [X]Position includes papers on a wonderfully diverse range of topics including but not limited to: the impacts of AI on sociolinguistics; how Generative AI creators have been waging war against artistic integrity; how quantum AI can break boundaries of traditional computing techniques; the potential for AI to detect Alzheimer's, and many more.

The advances in the digital world, and those in Generative AI technology specifically, will affect every single one of us if it has not already. Not only will it reshape the ways in which we work in education, it will also have far-reaching impacts on all aspects of our daily lives. If the following articles are anything to go by, it is clear that while worldwide reporting may foreground the negative aspects, it is not the case for everyone, and that the (digital) future is very bright for our authors. We hope you enjoy reading these impressive pieces of work as much as we enjoyed working with them.

The Editorial Team

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