

The need to reappraise adult educators' professional competence has been highlighted in light of the rapidly changing landscape of lifelong learning, its participants and its practices (voor Beleid, 2010; Teaching Council, 2011; CEDEFOP, 2013; European Commission, 2013). Recent European policy has highlighted the need for the increased professionalism of adult educators stating that 'support should be provided for specific programmes for adult educators' (European Commission, 2008, p12); while SOLAS (2014, p20) argues for an approach that 'marries pedagogical skills with up-to-date industry relevant expertise' for staff that have education and training delivery responsibilities.

Associated with these discussions is the notion of Digital Capabilities emerging as an important 'new' generic competency in society, with technology tools and practices increasingly prevalent in education, the workplace and everyday life (European Commission, 2013). In Higher and Further Education discourse, a strong body of current research supports the view that the development of digital capabilities is now an essential competency of adult educators in the lifelong learning sector (Laurillard, 2012). An associated concern is that potential benefits arising from technology-enhanced learning may not be accessible for learners if the adult educators they engage with are not confident or competent in their capacity to develop digital literacies (Weller, 2011).

This view has led to the development of a range of pedagogical frameworks (e.g. Beetham, 2010; Martin, 2005) that enable the embedding of contextual digital literacy tools practices into professional education programmes (PEPs). However, there is currently a lack of research that evidences how adult educators react to engaging in such PEPs, specifically in terms of their capabilities and professional identity (Bouwma-Gearhart, 2012). As such, how do we know if these curricula hold value in the eyes of our key stakeholders? Are their experiences positive or negative? Can we have confidence that the PEPs being developed are providing tangible opportunities for adult educators to develop the capabilities they need now and into the future? To answer this, we need the direct input of adult educators.

This paper presents the insights of adult educators who engaged with a third year undergraduate BA in Education and Training module titled 'The Virtual Learning Environment' at NUI Galway. This module employed the DigEULit digital literacy framework approach (Martin, 2005) to embed digital literacies into that curriculum. The following feedback themes harvested from adult educators through Professional Learning Journal posts and semi-structured interviews will be presented: self efficacy; engaging with authentic hands-on activities; transfer from the educational setting to the workplace; and the overall impact of adult educators engaging with this curriculum in terms of their professional capabilities and identity.

This presentation will be of interest to HE/FE educational providers, policy makers and practitioners charged with workforce, educator and student digital capacity building. It will also resonate with colleagues interested in digital literacy curriculum frameworks and QQI professional standards development.

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