

# Transforming Digital Learning with Apple

exeter college



## The Concept

### About Exeter College

Exeter College is an award-winning, worldclass college and Devon's only Ofsted 'outstanding' college. Established in 1970, Exeter College provides tertiary education for around 10,000 – 12,000 students and offers A Levels, BTECs, Apprenticeships, Professional Qualifications and T Levels. In 2021 the College was shortlisted for the coveted title of 'FE College of the Year' and 'Apprenticeship Provider of the Year'.

## The Challenge

### Future-proofing technology and digital services

In response to the regional digital skills shortage, Exeter College has ambitions to be at the forefront of support to the growing technology and digital industries in the South West. They believe that the future of the sector will be secured by developing programming, software and app development skills for people in the community.

## The How

### Increasing digital skills

Exeter College's aim was to help increase the digital skills within the South West. They are an important education partner in the newly formed South West Institute of Technology (SWIOT). A £10.3 million project, the SWIOT is focused on revolutionising digital, engineering and manufacturing technology education across the region.

An investment in skills and technology was required to see their plans realised. Exeter College turned to Academia to support them.



## The Solution

### Empower the trainers

Armed with some brand new Apple MacBook Pros and iPads, staff were able to earn their certifications as Apple Certified Trainer – App Development with Swift status.

### Work with Academia to build a state-of-the-art Mac Suite

In preparation for a new cohort of students following the Apple syllabus, the college needed to fit out a state-of-the-art Mac suite planned for the SWIOT. Academia helped to provide timely advice and guidance on the most suitable Apple technology and how the devices should be set-up, deployed and managed within the state-of-the-art Mac suite.

## The Impact

### Broadening learning pathways

Exeter College has set up their Apple Academy, added new courses to their roster and included iOS app development across a variety of existing courses including Level 2 and Level 3 IT. They have also created extracurricular learning opportunities through iOS development and learning-to-code groups for students outside of the IT department, as well as building digital skills into other curriculums like humanities, art, maths, and languages. Similarly, they are pioneering a 16-week government-funded app development bootcamp. This allows students to retrain in software development for free, where they will gain the skills and build a portfolio to get them started in a career in the software industry.

## Enriched learning experiences

Local businesses have been encouraged to commission the students to work on real projects and put their newfound skills into action. This not only provides valuable resources to local businesses without cost but also gives students real-life experience as well as practical examples of their work to show to possible future employers. For example, students studying Software Development in Apple Swift Programming Skills bootcamp have developed an app for the Royal Navy Leadership Academy (RNLA).

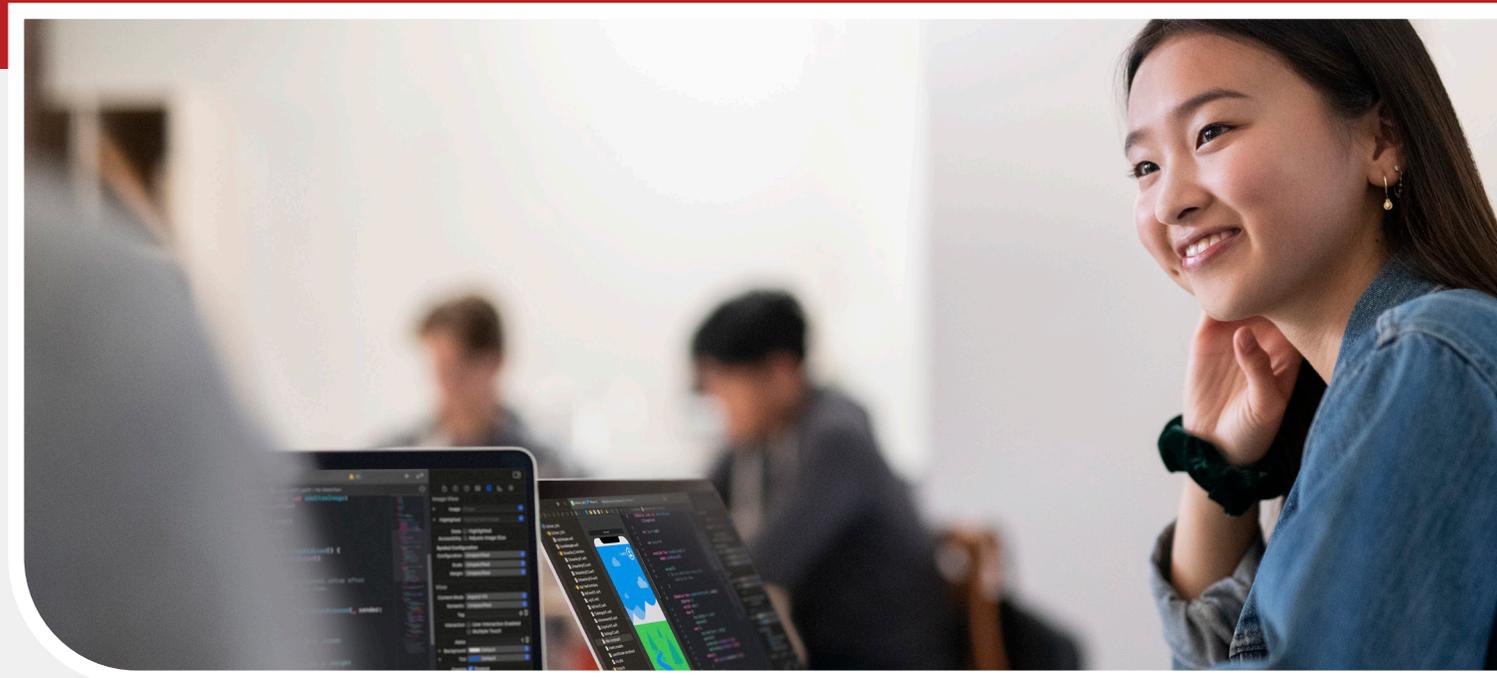
The students were set a brief to simplify and digitise the marking and scoring system used in the RNLA when carrying out assessments in the field. Seven students worked on the project; they were all allocated tasks such as graphic design, navigation flow, and the data model.

Paul Barnard, Quality Assurance Chief for the Royal Navy Leadership Academy said;

“The brief was to digitise the marking scheme that we utilise in the Royal Navy Leadership Academy. We call it ORCE, which stands for observe, record, classify, evaluate. Currently, it’s being done by paper, so instructors are out and about with students trying to write down in the wind and rain. This app will massively help the instructors. They will be able to standardise their reports as well as save huge amounts of time.”

## Connections with local and national employers

The college hosts cross-collaboration events where they take briefs from local and national employers to simulate industry practice. Briefs have been received from the Royal Navy, Optix Solutions, Honiton Rugby Football Club, Eco-Tech and Your Digital Future (YDF).



“

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”

Paul Barnard | Royal Navy Leadership Academy



Upon completion of the app development bootcamp, Emma went to work at the Met Office Headquarters in Exeter as a data analyst. This was partly due to the soft and transferable skills she had picked up during the course surrounding development and project lifecycles.

Cliff studied the Apple app development bootcamp and has a passion for technology. He was interested in developing some of his own app ideas, as well as wanting to deepen his knowledge of the programming language Swift. Cliff utilised the bootcamps to up-skill in his employment, and acquired the new role of "Digital Process and Innovation Lead" at Capita.



## Better student engagement

The use of Apple technology at the college has helped educators connect with students, foster collaboration and democratize access to resources.

A dynamic and efficient way to learn: The use of unique Apple features like AirDrop to share resources between devices has been a great benefit to students and staff - enabling teachers to respond promptly to any questions or issues and for students to get to work quickly and stay on task.

Cross-course collaboration: Digital marketers, software developers and data analysts now work together on the same projects to generate ideas and build apps, often addressing the briefs provided by local companies and reflecting what is currently going on in the business world.

Promoting student equality: Access to these technologies promotes equality among learners as not all students have access to the most up-to-date technology at home.

## More efficient and effective teaching

Apple technology has also enhanced how teachers have been able to approach their lessons. Discussions can take place around key coding or development concepts, and then students can be guided to Swift Playgrounds to try out what they have learnt. This allows teachers to work with students 1-to-1 if they get stuck on a problem and empowers learners who are ahead to challenge themselves and develop their app further.

Technology teachers have gained a passion for the Apple platform and are now inspiring other staff members to utilise Apple hardware and software in other disciplines. To encourage this, the college has run several staff development sessions on topics including:

- > Augmented Reality in Education using iPad Pro;
- > alternative assessment methods, such as creating podcasts on GarageBand or mini-documentaries using iMovie;
- > introduction classes to Mac OS for staff new to Apple.

## What's Next?

Exeter College is keen to develop its Apple syllabus and use of Apple technology, so is exploring:

- > making iOS and Swift development a core part of Level 3 Mobile Apps Development;
- > extra-curricular opportunities for other learners across the college;
- > providing adult learners with the chance to learn through a modular approach to development and Swift Fundamentals;
- > working further with the DfE to expand the Apple Bootcamp course available to adult learners;
- > an education outreach project, delivering Swift programming and Apple app development with local schools to engage students in digital technology earlier.

Contact our Further Education team to discuss how  
Apple technology can transform teaching and  
learning at your college.

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