Questionnaire for Employer Use – Digital Poverty/Digital Capital

Digital Poverty is a serious issue. Inevitably, this is impacting more on those students who are disadvantaged socially or economically.

Definitions

Digital poverty is about the inability, for a wide variety of reasons, to interact fully with the **digital** world.
(*https://www.bcs.org/content-hub/digital-poverty-and-digital-capital/* , *British Computer Society Content Hub, September 2020*)

A student is in 'digital poverty' if they are without access to one of the core items of digital infrastructure, which are:

> appropriate hardware (laptop, tablet, not smartphone) with reasonable access e.g. not shared between three or four people.
> appropriate software
> reliable/affordable access to the internet and data
> technical support and repair when required
> a trained teacher or instructor
> an appropriate study space

(*https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/news-blog-and-events/press-and-media/digital-poverty-risks-leaving-students-behind/*, *Office for Students, September 2020*)

How can you help your school/college?

Establish what the challenges are, and how you can help. You may want to ask:

> What are the challenges the Careers Leader and other staff are facing delivering Careers Learning remotely?
> What proportion of students are affected by digital poverty/digital capital using the above definitions?
> What support has the Careers Leader had so far to address this? This could be government or other organisations? (please see list below for suggestions)
> Which elements of Digital Capital are particularly difficult to address?
> Has the Careers Leader accessed the support via the CAS website?

Can your organisation help the school/college to address any of these challenges?

Further resources/ways forward

- National newspaper campaigns, including the Daily Mirror and Daily Mail. https://www.thesun.co.uk/money/13664602/free-broadband-data-homeschooling-kids/ includes information on the offers from EE, Three and BT Mobile, as well as other support
- BITC National Response campaign: https://businessresponsecovid.org.uk/
- Local campaigns such as: Bristol 24/7 campaign: https://digilocal.org.uk/laptop-donations/
- Computing at School website: https://www.computingatschool.org.uk/
- BCS Local branches: https://www.bcs.org/membership/member-communities/
- https://www.faireducation.org.uk/news/2021/1/11/access-and-donate-to-schemes-helping-to-bridge-the-digital-divide   includes a list of schemes running.

Further Reading on Digital Poverty/Digital Capital:

- https://www.bcs.org/content-hub/digital-poverty-and-digital-capital/
- https://www.suttontrust.com/our-research/learning-in-lockdown/
- https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/news-blog-and-events/press-and-media/digital-poverty-risks-leaving-students-behind/