



IDEAL FUTURE

Integrated Digital Educational Leadership
for the Future

Case Studies

Examples of how to use IDEAL Future outputs in practice: Case studies from Teachers, Digital Leaders, Teacher Educators and Professional Learning providers

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Case study 1 — A digital leader in a school who takes a self-study course themselves and applies the learning to support whole-school planning.

"I'm a Digital Leader in my school — which means I'm often the one asking other staff to try new things. But this term, I decided to be the learner. I signed up for a self-study course on the IDEAL Future Hub."

"I chose Fundamentals of Digital Resource Creation, Modification, and AI Integration in Education. It covered the responsible creation and use of digital resources — copyright and licensing, strategies for building and adapting materials, and how AI tools can support that process."

"It was self-paced, so I worked through it around my normal timetable — a bit each week."

"What struck me was how many of us create digital resources every week without really thinking about copyright, or how to adapt them properly for different learners. The course also opened my eyes to how AI tools could support that — not replace the thinking, but speed up the groundwork."

"I started keeping notes as I went — not just for me, but for the whole school."

"I brought what I'd learned to our whole-school digital strategy meeting. We used what I'd covered on licensing and AI-assisted content creation to shape some clear, practical guidance for staff."

"It reshaped our planning. We're now building a shared approach to creating and adapting digital resources — including safe, sensible use of AI — into our School Development Plan. Not because someone told us to, but because I could show, from my own learning, why it mattered."

If you are interested in exploring how you can use the IDEAL FUTURE teacher academy to support whole school planning consider using our self-study material on our IDEAL Digital hub available at...

Case study 2 — A group of teachers in a school choose a focus they want to enhance, take a course together, and experiment and try things

"There were four of us. Different subjects, different year groups — but we all noticed the same thing: our students weren't really collaborating when we used digital tools. They were just... working alongside each other."

"So, we decided to pick that as our focus, and tackle it together."

"We found a course on the IDEAL Future Hub called Collaborative and Human-Centred Approaches to Digital Learning. It looked at how technology can genuinely support collaboration — not just replace it with screen time."

"We agreed to work through it together, as a small group, over a few weeks."

"Each week we'd take an idea from the course and try it in our own classrooms — then come back and compare notes. What worked, what didn't, what surprised us. More importantly we noticed the course was not focused on technology for the sake of it but encouraged meaningful integration that added real pedagogical value".

"We tried restructuring a group task, changing how students used a shared document, even just changing the questions we asked. Small things, but we were testing them properly, together."

"Having others to try it with made it feel less risky. If something didn't work in my class, someone else usually had a reason why — or a fix."

"We started to see real differences — students actually building on each other's ideas, not just dividing up the work."

" And because there were four of us across different subjects, it wasn't just one classroom's success story. It was starting to feel like something the whole school could learn from."

If you are a group of teachers looking to work together to learn more about pedagogical focused approaches to using technology in your classroom you can view the courses on our self-study hub at..

Case study 3 — A digital leader in a school who takes the courses and delivers relevant elements of the teacher academy to staff in their school

"As Digital Leader, part of my role is making sure good practice doesn't stay with just one person. So, when I started working through courses on the IDEAL Future Hub, I always had one question in mind: how could I bring this back to the rest of my staff?"

"Over the term, I worked through a few courses that felt most relevant to where our school was — Mastering Digital Resource Selection [id=74], and Digital Teaching and Learning in an Age of Emerging Technologies [id=71]. Both self-paced, so I could fit them around my timetable."

"As I went, I wasn't just learning for myself. I was picking out the bits I thought our staff would find most useful."

"I didn't just repeat the course content — I adapted it. Pulled out the parts most relevant to our context, added examples from our own classrooms, and turned it into something that would work in a 45-minute staff CPD slot."

"That's the real skill, I think — not just doing the course but translating it for your own school."

"I ran two short sessions — one on evaluating digital resources, one on integrating technology purposefully rather than just for its own sake. Staff tried things out live, asked questions, pushed back on ideas — which is exactly what you want."

"A few teachers have already told me they've changed something in their planning because of it."

If you are interested in exploring how you can use the IDEAL FUTURE teacher academy to support professional learning in your school – have a look at our facilitator guide and our self-study hub. All resources are open source and can be used to deliver professional learning in your own school.

Case study 4 — Conflicting narratives about technology — teacher

Everyone has an opinion on technology in education. One article tells you it's transforming learning. The next tells you it's ruining attention spans. I got tired of picking a side based on whoever shouted loudest — I wanted to know what actually happened in my classroom, with my students."

"I found Digital Teaching and Learning in an Age of Emerging Technologies on the IDEAL Future Hub. What appealed to me was the focus on evidence — not 'technology is good' or 'technology is bad,' but how to actually test what's working in your own practice."

"It was self-paced, so I could work through it around my normal teaching week."

"So, I picked one thing — using a digital tool for retrieval practice at the start of lessons — and I tried it properly. Same group, over a few weeks. I kept simple notes: engagement, quiz scores, how students responded when I asked them directly."

"I wasn't trying to prove the tool was brilliant. I was just trying to see, honestly, what changed."

"Some things worked better than I expected. Some didn't move the needle at all — and a couple of things I dropped completely, because the evidence just wasn't there."

"That felt like real progress. Not because I proved a point, but because I stopped guessing."

If you are interested in exploring evidence-based approaches to using technology in your teaching and also piloting and gathering evidence about the impact of technology on your practice visit our IDEAL hub to view courses and material. Each course is 12.5 hours long and consists of practical activities to encourage you to try technology in your practice.

Case study 5 — Teacher educator: Practical contexts for supporting digital competency and leadership

"I work with pre-service or future teachers, and I didn't want them just to complete a course on the IDEAL Future Hub on their own and tick a box. I wanted to use it as the backbone of a proper flipped classroom — where the real learning happens when we're together."

"We used Fundamentals of Digital Resource Creation, Modification, and AI Integration in Education as the pre-session content. They worked through it independently, in their own time, before each session."

"But I didn't design the live sessions from scratch. IDEAL Future also produce a facilitator guide, built directly from their pedagogical model — and that shaped everything about how I ran things."

"The pedagogical model behind the Hub is built around choice and autonomy — not every learner arrives at the same starting point, or needs the same input. Content is structured around proficiency levels, adapted from the DigCompEdu framework."

"The facilitator guide helped me hold onto that in a group setting. Instead of assuming everyone needed the same conversation, I used it to structure discussion and tasks around where learners actually were — some pushing further into AI tools, others still building confidence with the basics."

"My role shifted from lecturing to facilitating. We didn't just recap what they'd read — we discussed it. Where they agreed, where they were sceptical, what didn't make sense in practice."

"Then we got practical: in small groups, they developed digital resources of their own, applying what they'd learned about copyright, adaptation, and AI-assisted creation. That's where the real thinking happens — not consuming content, but wrestling with it together."

"The outputs weren't just for our sessions. Pre-service teachers took the resources they'd built and piloted them on school placement — testing them with real students, in real lessons."

"They came back with genuine classroom evidence: what worked, what needed changing, what surprised them. We used our final sessions — again guided by the facilitator materials — to evaluate those resources properly, as a group, against that evidence."

If you are interested in exploring how you can use the IDEAL FUTURE teacher academy to support the development of digital competence and digital leadership in preservice or future teachers – have a look at our facilitator guide and our self-study

hub. All resources are open source and can be used to deliver professional learning in your own school

Case study 6 — Mentoring a school for digital leadership: Professional learning provider

"Within our provision of professional learning to teachers. We found that we spent a lot of time looking for and developing materials rather than building a relationship with schools. IDEAL Future allowed us to do this. Using the mentoring templates, we sat down with schools first and listen to their context"

"We use a structured consultation. We ask what's already working, what the school wants to enhance, and critically what success would actually look like for them."

"Recently we had a school that was very advanced on their digital journey, they had 1:1 devices, a google platform and an active digital learning committee. They weren't starting from zero. But they were concerned about taking things further, embedding technology meaningfully into teaching, and using assessment to build independent learners."

"From that conversation, we built an Individual Learning Plan together something we shaped with them. We merged their three priorities into one clear goal: exploring multiple forms of expression in assessment, through the UDL lens, to support inclusion and self-regulated learning."

"The plan set out a realistic pace thirty minutes a week per team member taking content on the IDEAL HUB, one mentor meeting a month, and an optional Community of Practice session for anyone who wanted more."

"Each month had a focus and we had a template to support our transformative conversations and share plans for each stage of the mentoring. January was about taking materials on the hub about self-regulated learning strategies — reflecting honestly on how assessment was already working in each subject area. February moved into UDL and incremental assessment, and teachers went and asked their own students how they liked to express their learning."

"By March, subject teams were drafting assessment plans for low-stakes, technology-supported assignments, these were ready to pilot."

"In April, they piloted it. Real students, real lessons, real feedback — not a theoretical exercise."

"Every mentor meeting had a clear focus of its own: not just 'how did it go,' but which tools actually helped, how different teachers were likely to respond, and what it meant for their own role as they handed more ownership to students."

"By May, the conversation had shifted again — from one subject's pilot to the whole school. What had been learned, and how could it shape the school's digital plan going forward?"

"The content on IDEAL and the mentoring templates allowed us the time to build relationships, ask hard questions and engage in transformative dialog with the school."
"

If you are interested in exploring how you can use the IDEAL FUTURE teacher academy to support mentoring supported CPL you can see our mentoring guide on the website and the self-study material on our IDEAL Digital hub

Case study 7 — CPL provider using challenges to deliver contextual and practical professional learning

"When I run a workshop, I don't want to open with a slide of theory. I want the room to recognise themselves in the first two minutes. That's exactly what IDEAL Future's challenge scenarios do."

"There are twenty of these, each one a short first-person video — a teacher or leader describing a real tension they're facing. Not abstract policy language. Real frustration, real emotion."

"One I use often is Adapting to Rapid Technological Advancements — a teacher describing how exhausting it is to keep relearning tools that change under her feet, and how that stress ripples out to students and parents too."

"I play it at the start of a session, before anyone's said a word. And every time, I watch heads nod. Someone always says, 'that's literally me.'"

"That's the point — it's built on a model that moves from context, to how it plays out across the whole school community, to real emotional connection. By the time it ends, the room isn't being told there's a challenge. They already feel it."

"From there, I use the prompt questions that come with each scenario — built around research, reasoning, and reflection. So with this one, we start by researching how other schools handle the pace of change. Then we reason through it together: how do we actually balance keeping up with technology against protecting our own time and energy?"

"And finally, we reflect — on what this means for how they lead their own team through change, not just how they personally cope with it."

"From there, the conversation naturally leads into the Hub — relevant courses that speak directly to what's just come up. But by that point, they're not choosing a course because I told them to. They're choosing it because the challenge named something they were already feeling, and now they want a way through it."

If you want to find out more about the challenges you can go to our you tube channel to see the videos and check out our facilitator guide about how to use them to prompt discussion

Case study 8 — Teacher education institute: International collaboration

"We wanted our pre-service teachers to think beyond their own classroom, their own country even. Talking about 'global perspectives' in a lesson is one thing. Actually, connecting with someone in another country, working on something real together — that's completely different."

"That's what drew us to the IDEAL Future Hub. It's not just self-study content — it has members from over thirty countries. There's a dedicated international space where you can connect with educators and students elsewhere, and live courses where you're learning alongside people from completely different education systems in real time."

"We joined one of the live courses, and almost immediately, our group was talking with participants from Ireland, Latvia, Spain, Greece — comparing how technology actually gets used in our classrooms, what challenges look the same, and what looks completely different depending on where you are."

"There was a regular discussions and sharing practice with people genuinely working through the same questions we were. I decided to hold a live session to allow everyone meet. I shared a link to a TEAMS meeting via the hub. That took it to the next level! "

From there, a small group of us kept talking beyond the session — comparing approaches to a shared challenge, giving each other feedback, even planning a joint task our students could work on together."

"For our students, that international dimension changed the whole experience. They weren't just learning about digital education — they were seeing different perspectives. "

"You can do a lot of learning in our own classes in the University, and it still has value. But the Hub gave us something more — a genuine international network, built right into the learning itself. That's not something we could have built on our own. "

Case study 9 — A group of teachers with their own learning community

TEACHER 1: "We didn't want one person carrying digital leadership on their own. So we built our own little learning community— five of us, different subjects, different year groups."

TEACHER 2: "But we also didn't want everyone doing the same course. We wanted to cover more ground, together."

TEACHER 3: "So each of us picked a different course on the IDEAL Future Hub — based on what we were genuinely curious about, or what we thought our school needed most. One of us looked at AI and digital resource creation, another at assessment, another at supporting self-regulated learning."

TEACHER 1: "All self-paced, so we fit it around our own timetables."

TEACHER 4: "The real value came at our meetings. Each of us took a turn — show and tell, basically. Not a formal report. Just: here's what I learned, here's something I actually tried in my classroom, here's what happened."

TEACHER 2: "Hearing it from a colleague, with real examples from our own school, landed completely differently than being told about a course in an email."

TEACHER 3: "Other staff started noticing. They'd hear us talking about something we'd tried, and they'd ask questions — sometimes even asked to sit in on the next show and tell."

TEACHER 1: "That's exactly what we wanted. Not five experts sitting on their knowledge, but five people modelling that learning is normal here — and making it easy for anyone else to jump in."

" It has actually helped to build a digital learning culture!!

Case study 10 — School leader: Developing a baseline competence

"We had pockets of real digital confidence in our school — a few teachers doing brilliant things — but everyone else was miles behind. Before we could talk about anything advanced, we needed everyone to have some level of digital skills."

"The IDEAL Future Hub is structured around proficiency levels, so instead of guessing where to start, we could see what a genuine foundational level actually looks like. We asked every member of staff — regardless of experience — to work through the same core content."

"No one was singled out. It wasn't 'catch-up' for a few people. It was the whole staff, together, establishing one shared starting point."

"We built it into our INSERVICE days and gave everyone protected time — thirty minutes a week, no exceptions. Even our most confident digital users went through it, which mattered. It signalled this wasn't remedial. It was a genuine baseline for everyone."

"For some staff, it was validating — confirming what they already knew. For others, it was the first time digital practice had ever been explained clearly, without jargon."

"The biggest change wasn't any single skill. It was the shared language. Suddenly everyone was using the same terms, referring to the same ideas, in planning meetings and corridor conversations alike."

"That common ground made it possible to actually build a whole-school digital plan — because for the first time, everyone could genuinely take part in that conversation, not just the people who were already confident."