

# Impact of technology essay



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This paper presents an interim review of evidence from published independent studies and analysis on the relationship between technology and the learning outcomes of school-aged learners. This review will inform a further Becta publication in November 2009 which will draw on additional evidence and offer a more detailed analysis of the implications of key studies for educational practice. The context of this review is one where children and young people spend much of their time using technology in their own ways to support learning, sometimes independent from specific guidance and support from schools. The rapid changes and developments in technology are signalling an age where constant access to information resources and knowledge networks is increasingly a norm, and children and young people are increasingly bringing that expectation to their learning in school. How educators respond to this is a critical issue for our times.

It is increasingly important to develop a good understanding of the role that technology has played in supporting improved learning. This review does that, drawing from a range of recent studies. As the use of technology develops, both within and outside formal learning, it is also important to keep up to date, which is why this review focuses predominantly on recent research. In considering ‘the impact of technology’, what is meant by ‘technology’? Current information and communication technologies are diverse, ranging from access to broadband and the internet, to classroom display technologies, networked technologies such as online learning environments, and specific tools and devices such as data loggers and handheld computers. We must not wrongly transfer findings from specific

uses of technology to broader judgements about the role of technology in learning.