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Use of electronic tools with students on work placement

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Use of Web Logs and other Tools to support Students' use of Reflective Journals

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SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Overview

- Background and context
- How we implemented the features
- Different approaches
- What next

Background and Context

- Discussion tools in VLP
- Blogs for u/grad and PGCE:
 - Community blog
 - Individual reflective blog
- Wiki

Overview of the VLP Discussion Forum

- Pros

- Readily available – tools and access
- Known environment
- Protected
- Within NTU environment
- Notification of new entries

- Cons

- Navigation
- Bookmarking
- Lack of features
- Constrained to one module – default
- Lack of ownership – personalisation and customisation
- Cannot post via email

So what's a blog then...?

- A blog is a user-generated website where entries are made in journal style and usually displayed in a reverse chronological order.
- **Pros**
 - Can upload text, images, videos, sound
 - Blog spaces are usually customisable.
 - Individualised
 - Bookmarkable
 - Notification of new entries
- **Cons**
 - External to NTU
 - Advertising – on LiveJournal
 - Not a known environment
 - Students have to register to create a 'Community' blog

Application of Blogs

- Where?
 - JHP – introduced to Year 1 pilot group
 - PGCE Secondary – ICT and English strands
 - BA Primary

- Why?
 - An alternative to reflective journals/diaries
 - Support work based placements
 - Higher order learning
 - Constructivist learning
 - Collaborative work
 - Students seem to enjoy it
 - Student engagement

Comparison: discussion board v blog

- PGCE Applied ICT
- BSc (hons) Business and ICT, year 2

Examples

- [Discussion Board](#)
- Pre-course discussion board

Choice of Blogging tool

- [Blog](#)
- [Blog after changes](#)

How to use the Blog

- Students need to register
- Give you access as a friend
- For Community blog – you need to ‘manage’ and give permission
 - Welcome message
 - ‘Rules’
 - Encourage personalising area

Success

- Difficult to gauge on u/grad course, but will be part of assessment
- Dependent on tutor's attitude
- Much improved on 2nd placement – photos being used and customisation of site
- Coherence – sense of community – only works if students engage

Comments from students:

- Fantastic
- Very supportive on placement
- Don't forget to post

Wiki

- What is a Wiki? – collaborative web page
- Which tool we chose and why
- Pros
 - Collaborative working
 - Version control
 - Tracking contributions
 - Attach documents
 - Simple to use and Intuitive
 - Permission control
 - Email when someone has contributed
 - Very easy to customise – gives more personal front end
 - Simple to set out information – very similar to MS packages
 - Simple to upload files, edit, delete, etc
 - People can work when it is convenient to them – flexible
- Cons

 - External to VLP
 - Not owned by us so could be taken down
 - Cannot contribute to the same page at the same time
 - Unknown environment

Wikis on PGCE ICT

- Students had to produce and deliver a lesson which included teaching resources
- Comments from last year's group
- Each group chose to use the Wiki
- Access originally only for group members
- After presentation, all wikis were accessible to all students to edit
- Used the Wiki to teach their lesson – gave all students access to the resources

- [Example](#)

Wikis on BA Joint Honours Programme

- Collaborative task
 - Why it worked
 - What we would change
-
- [Example](#)

Success?

- Students chose to use them
- Really enjoyed the experience
- Engagement
- Now using Wikis in their own teaching – so we are impacting in schools across the East Midlands And beyond

Work in Progress: Futures

- Analysis of use on these PGCEs to be conducted at the end of the year
- Iterative – to inform practice for next year
- To disseminate to other PGCEs and programmes
- Staff development
- Informs VLE replacement project

Any Questions?