

UNIVERSITY *of York*

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FORUM

ENHANCING LEARNING AND TEACHING



Educational Technology

2014 Learning and Teaching Conference: Call for Papers
News, training and funding opportunities

FORUM

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Contents

- 4 iTunes, YouTube, WeTube, ChemTube
- 6 A guide to setting up an academic blog
- 7 The impact of modern technology on the learning environment
- 8 "E-learning will make you go blind!"
- 10 Using technology for learning: an innovation or an expectation?
- 11 The Employability Tutorial: Supporting students' career development through the Yorkshare VLE
- 12 The future of e-learning at York
- 13 Using Innovative Technologies in the Psychology in Education Programme at the University of York
- 14 Tweeting about the past in class – or, what Twitter makes possible for students and teachers
- 16 Learning and Teaching Calendar of Events: Spring Term 2014

For a large print, black and white text version please contact Sharon Meredith on ext 2018

Editorial



Have social media and new communication tools changed the way we perceive teaching and learning? All the contributions to this issue of *Forum* consider this question from different and multifaceted perspectives.

David Smith, Chemistry, explains how his iTunes project expanded to involve undergraduate students as video makers, enhancing education and skills, and producing a rich resource of videos which are accessed worldwide.

A straightforward guide to setting up an academic blog is provided by Ned Potter, Academic Liaison Librarian, who suggests why you might blog, and decisions to be made before starting.

Dan Whitmore, Academic Officer, Students' Union, offers the students' point of view stressing how modern technology applied to academic exchange of ideas is becoming increasingly relevant.

Simon Davis, E-Learning Advisor, sheds a light on some common misconceptions about e-learning.

Matt Cornock, VLE Co-ordinator, Social Policy and Social Work, discusses encouraging innovation in technology-enhanced learning and how to approach this.

Chris Millson, Careers' E-Learning support and Online Training Manager, writes about the on-line Employability Tutorial which contains various activities that enable students to build an employability plan.

Richard Walker, E-Learning Development Team Manager, examines the role of e-learning at York, considering what is currently offered and challenges for the future.

The use of innovative technology in Psychology in Education is explored by Rob Klassen and Claudine Bowyer-Crane.

Sara Perry, Archaeology shares her experience of using Twitter, "a significant forum to share resources, prepare for classes and assessments, and communicate immediately with those we are studying and learning from."

Our readers will see opening in front of them the doors of a new cyber world where education and teaching are taken to a different and more exciting level: they will learn of the advances in educational technology that are currently taking place at York while, perhaps, having a vision for possible future improvements.

Paola Zerilli
 Editor

E-Learning Development Team training sessions

Throughout the Spring Term, the E-Learning Development Team is offering the following training sessions, open to all staff:

- Getting Started with the VLE
- Media and Multimedia Primer
- Assessment and Feedback Primer
- Interaction and Student Contributions Primer.

For further details on these sessions including dates, please see the Team's training schedule on the VLE – <http://goo.gl/4aplBi>

& LEARNING TEACHING CONFERENCE 2014

Thinking outside the module box

Wednesday 18 June 2014

Students apply for a place on, study for and receive, degrees; they experience their studies as a process, with a beginning, middle and end. Programme planning should therefore form the bedrock of what a university aims to achieve in terms of student learning.

The 2014 Learning and Teaching Conference will be a chance for colleagues to discuss programme level issues, to see the bigger picture and to discuss exactly what it is that we want our students to achieve through their engagement with our programmes of learning.

Workshop themes:

- setting expectations and mapping progression through a degree
- how student development and the concept of 'graduateness' can inform programme design
- the relationship between philosophies of learning and programme design
- defining assessment goals across programmes
- inclusivity, employability, internationalisation and sustainability – balancing increasing external demands on programme design
- using technology to support programme coherence
- designing effective one year Masters programmes
- planning for skills development through skills frameworks – what can they offer.

Posters:

- any learning and teaching theme.

Call for:

DISCUSSION PAPERS

SHOWCASES AND

POSTER PRESENTATIONS

Keynote speaker:

Dr Mitch Waterman, University of Leeds

The Deadline for submissions is

Friday 10 January 2014

iTube, YouTube, WeTube, ChemTube

David Smith, Department of Chemistry, 2013 HEA National Teaching Fellow, writes about the use of YouTube in his teaching.

YouTube – global media

Our students have grown up with the internet, a truly mobile technology on which YouTube is rapidly becoming a dominant global media source. This empowers academics with a mechanism to communicate directly with students, but also more widely. No longer do we need to arrange lectures or have a major TV series to engage people – we can put information online, for anyone to watch, almost anywhere in the world, whenever and wherever they want. If academics can do this, then our students are even better placed to make the most of this opportunity.

iTube – videos for educational support

In 2009, I realised how our students engaged with YouTube and decided to use video to help provide additional support for my first year organic chemistry course. I made a series of videos dealing with ‘amazing molecules’ found in everyday life. The first video addressed the hidden chemistry in a gin and tonic (my favourite drink), telling the story of quinine as an anti-malarial. More videos followed about the chemistry behind painkillers, curries and Coca-Cola – a context-led approach which stimulates students’ intrinsic motivation. These story-telling videos were supported by tutorial videos covering the chemistry in more detail.



The videos were deliberately made in ‘YouTube’ style, with no budget, film-maker, editor, or special equipment. They were collected together on my YouTube channel (‘ProfessorDaveatYork’) and advertised to undergraduates. Feedback indicated students found these videos very helpful, particularly for independent learning and revision, appreciating the innovative, mobile-friendly format and contextual approach.

ChemTube – chemistry videos go viral

Over the following months, I realised these videos were reaching far beyond our own academic community – nationally and even internationally – influencing professional chemists, potential chemistry students, and even non-chemists who had come across them.

- ‘I love your channel. I’m watching your tutorials and they’re covering a

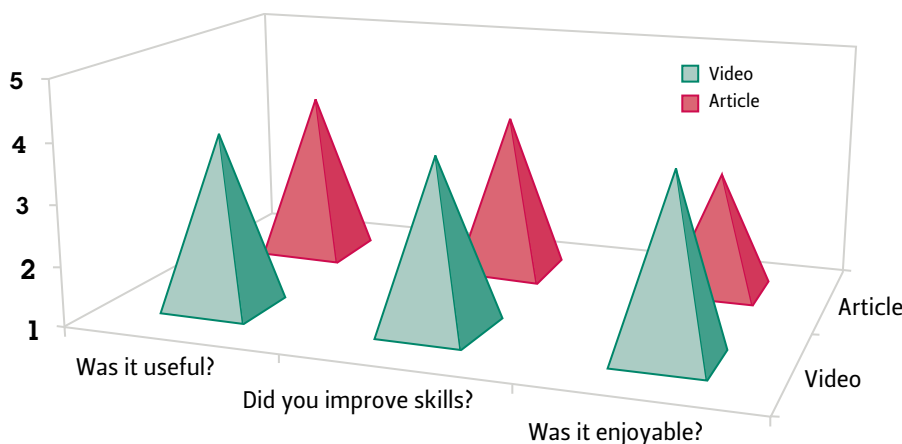
lot of the material I have to revise for my end of semester exams. Brilliant.’

- ‘Not a chemist, or in profession remotely connected...very interesting.’

In the light of this, I decided to make videos about the organic chemistry of the ‘legal high’ drug mephedrone, which was in the headlines for evading drug regulation. Very little was understood by the wider population about this drug – many assumed it was some sort of ‘herbal’ drug. The video presented its basic organic chemistry in an-unbiased, non-judgmental manner and made clear it is in the same basic class as well-known illegal drugs such as crystal meth. As one of the first online sources of chemical information about mephedrone, this video has since been viewed around a quarter of a million times, demonstrating the remarkable reach an ‘organic chemistry’ video can have on YouTube:

- ‘The most informative thing I’ve heard about mephedrone... good, sound, no bulls**t advice.’
- ‘Brilliantly explained and far more informative than anything...in the printed press.’

This approach has been extended to other topical issues including the chemistry of organ transplantation, HIV treatment and antibiotic resistance. In total, to October 2013, my videos have been viewed well over 350,000 times, ‘liked’ over 850 times, and there have been over 1,100 comments.



WeTube – harnessing student creativity

In 2010, I decided that rather than asking students to passively digest content made by me, getting them to actively create it could enhance their communication skills, creativity and understanding of chemical principles in context. This approach was embedded in a first year course on polymer chemistry – perfect for the ‘YouTube treatment’ as polymers are widely used from aviation and fashion to medicine and sport, facilitating contextualisation. All of our first year students (ca. 180) take a course on polymers and for the last three years, each student has had the assessment choice of either writing a magazine-style article, or producing a YouTube video, in which they present an aspect of polymer chemistry in a way which could be understood by an A level student.

Each year about 20% of the students choose to make videos. These videos are self-published on the students’ own YouTube channels, and they retain control of them – however, I link them together into playlists on my channel so they can be easily found and advertised. Many students show enormous creativity and making interesting and informative videos – including videoing sports, camping and even piloting an aeroplane to illustrate key points. Students have used stop-motion animation, drawn cartoons and demonstrated an ability to infuse their presentations both with humour and accurate technical detail.

I recently surveyed all students and compared the attitudes of video-making students with article-writing students, as it is their first experience of both exercises at York. The survey asked the same questions to each group and found whether they felt very negative or very positive (1–5). Overall, the students were positive about both exercises. Interestingly, however, the students who made videos were more positive than those who wrote articles. In particular, they found the experience a lot more enjoyable (+0.93):

- ‘Immensely fun, did not feel like work.’
- ‘It was so satisfying seeing the final video, challenging myself and learning new skills.’
- ‘It was nice to have a different method of assessment.’

Interestingly, when asked how well they could recall content, those making videos reported greater recall than those writing articles (+0.34):

- ‘Making a video definitely helped me remember the material.’
- As a word of caution, however, it should be noted that some students found making the video technically challenging and time-consuming.
- ‘Got bogged down in making a video – personal view though!’

Clearly if all students were required to produce videos, then additional support in terms of hardware provision and software training would be required. A number of students felt this would have helped. Unfortunately, such support was beyond the scope of the module in which this project was introduced – but may be considered in the future.

Interestingly, however, the students who made videos were more positive than those who wrote articles. In particular, they found the experience a lot more enjoyable.

ChemTube – students as global educators

The survey indicated that almost all students had enjoyed watching (3.68/5.00) each other’s YouTube videos – on average they watched about five:

- ‘Good to see people you know performing.’
- ‘It was interesting to see how different people approached the task.’

Excitingly, beyond their use in York, these videos go on to have online lives of their own, engaging a wide range of people. There have been numerous comments left on student videos demonstrating their ability to engage:

- ‘This is my favourite science video in the world.’
- ‘YouTube needs more of this, America needs more of this...’

This demonstrates the wider benefits of this approach. Not only are 18/19-year old undergraduates developing skills, but they also become global educators in their own right. This inspires our students and is great for public engagement, which needs diverse voices to engage the next generation:

- ‘I am impressed as how my video has many views from all over the

world, so maybe we are getting the chemistry message out there.’

Importantly, the comments feature of YouTube also allows our viewers to enter into real dialogues with us. As such, YouTube is a really democratic mechanism for outreach. It reaches individuals in their own homes, and provides them with a voice to interrogate the source of information and deepen their understanding.

Generation YouTube

In summary, my education/outreach project (iTube) expanded to involve our own undergraduate students as video makers (WeTube) – enhancing education and skills. This is creating a rich resource of videos which are widely accessed, leading to interactions with chemists and non-chemists worldwide (ChemTube). In this way, as well as educating our students, creative application of technology is empowering them to engage with the public.

Further reading/viewing

For a review of the use of YouTube in education see: C. Snelson, J. *Online Learning & Teaching* 2011, 7, 159–169.

To read more about contextualisation and creative learning see: D. K. Smith, *Nature Chemistry* 2011, 3, 681–684.

To find Dave’s YouTube videos: www.youtube.com/user/ProfessorDaveatYork (accessed Oct 2013).

For playlists of York Chemistry student videos see: (a) Year 1 York Chemistry Students 2012 – YouTube www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLJoTbJ2-ChDG3nrhYS5dei0Elwpl6G0Bs (accessed Oct 2013) (b) Year 1 York Chemistry Students 2012 – YouTube www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL376A45A670DD93F9 (accessed Oct 2013) (c) Year 1 York Chemistry Students 2011 – YouTube www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLD481DF3BDAA294DA (accessed Oct 2013)

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He has developed innovative approaches to encourage students to engage with science and was awarded a prestigious National Teaching Fellowship by the Higher Education Academy in 2013 in recognition of his contribution to education. Contact him at david.smith@york.ac.uk

A guide to setting up an academic blog



Ned Potter, Academic Liaison Librarian

If you want to use social media as part of your scholarly life, a blog is a great place to start. It's relatively straightforward from a technical point of view, and it provides a platform for your views and opinions, as blogs are regularly updated webpages, posting new articles on an on-going basis.

There are three main reasons to write a blog. The first is impact. Simply, your research will find a wider audience if you blog about it. The second is communication. You can instigate discussion (or even collaboration) via a blog, disseminate information to your peers, be part of a wider academic conversation and potentially engage a non-academic audience. The third reason is for teaching. You can provide further assignments for keen students to work on, have students work in small groups

There are three main reasons to write a blog. The first is impact. Simply, your research will find a wider audience if you blog about it.

to write and post summaries of content covered in class to build a compendium for content covered over a semester, use blogs for peer learning by encouraging students to post comments on each other's postings, and use blogs for projects where students need to include multimedia such as video and sound.

There are important decisions to make early on in the genesis of your blog. Are you blogging as you, as a potentially identifiable pseudonym, or completely anonymously? It depends on how controversial you are feeling. Are you blogging alone, with a partner, or as part

of a departmental / project team? Blogs work well with lone authors and with group authorship. Is blogging going to be a major activity or a minor activity? There are lots of tips for getting the most out of your blog, but you only need to bother with them if blogging is something you're going to devote some proper time to. It may be that it only plays a small role in your academic discourse, which is fine. It may be that it becomes integral, in which case it's worth doing well. And perhaps most importantly, is your blog for teaching, profile boosting, or both?

Public or private?

A blog for the purposes of building or enhancing your profile clearly needs to be public, but a blog used primarily for interacting with students can be public on a platform like Blogger or Wordpress, or private via the VLE. The VLE can provide a 'safe' place for students and staff to blog without public scrutiny, and the enrolments and availability are already in place – there is easy access for students to each other's blog for peer review. Another advantage is the blogging activities can be contextualised with other teaching materials.

There is no official advice from the University on which platform you use for a public blog, but I'd recommend Blogger for two reasons: you already have an account for it via your York log-in, as it is a Google product, and because no advertisements will appear on it (ads may appear on your blog if you use the slightly more intuitive software Wordpress, especially if the blog proves to be popular).

To set up a Blogger blog, go to www.blogger.com and sign in with your University email address and password and click **New blog**. Choose a title; you can change this at any time. For the

address (the URL), the only thing you really need to worry about is finding one that isn't already taken. Choose a template for your blog's appearance. Any template will do at first, you can change it later once you know what you're doing. Click on the title of your blog to enter its 'Dashboard', and explore the various options, then click **New Post** to actually write something (remembering that it can always be deleted later).

Keep in mind that from the **Settings** menu you can edit your **Privacy** levels so the blog is not findable by anyone who does not know the exact URL for this; it may be worth doing this until you feel completely ready to launch your blog upon the world (just remember to change the Privacy settings back when the time comes!).

More information

To see more on all these aspects of blog creation, along with advice on blogging well, view the presentation from the FORUM blogging workshop online, at www.slideshare.net/UniofYorkLibrary/blogging-in-the-academic-environment. Good luck with your blogging activities, and feel free to get in touch with me (ned.potter@york.ac.uk) for advice and guidance.

Ned Potter is an Academic Liaison Librarian for various Arts and Humanities departments.

He runs workshops on social media and emerging technologies for the Learning & Teaching Forum, the Researcher Development Team, and various external organisations such as the British Library.



"E-learning will make

Simon Davis on the myths and realities of learning technologies

It's nearly ten years since the University of York first articulated a vision for the use of centrally supported learning technology to facilitate teaching and learning. Providing online support for students' learning has shifted from a fringe activity favoured by innovators and enthusiasts to a central strand of teaching for the majority of departments, while individuals continue to innovate and disseminate good practice at conferences and other events.

Despite the significant growth in interest and uptake across the institution, a number of widely held beliefs about "e-learning" and its impact on academic practice remain. Some of these beliefs reflect valid concerns that we need continuing work with the academic community to address, but others reflect misconceptions, such as the following examples:

"E-learning is the VLE"

While the Yorkshare VLE is the most widely used (and visible) online learning technology at York, it's not the end of the story. There are a number of other e-learning services and tools such as the Replay lecture capture service, Turnitin text matching software, the EARL reading list tool and Google Apps for education. Google Apps are increasingly being used to complement the VLE's functionality, offering tools that can't be matched by Yorkshare or simply offer a better fit with the way that staff and students want to work.



"E-learning replaces face to face teaching"

It is widely held that, in most cases, face-to-face interactions offer a better way of engaging learners than online activity. One of staff and students' most common fears about e-learning is that it will somehow replace face-to-face teaching. While it may be true that a group discussion in a seminar room over the course of an hour will have a different quality and draw on different skills to an asynchronous online discussion over the course of a week, the two activities, if planned effectively, could be seen as complementary rather than in competition with each other (Laurillard, 2002). Online learning activities which play to the strengths of the online environment, have the potential to develop a different set of skills for students (Jonassen, 1996) or allow students who do not thrive in the cut and thrust of the seminar debate (which

can often be dominated by more vocal, confident students) to express themselves in different ways (Dede & Kremer, 1999).

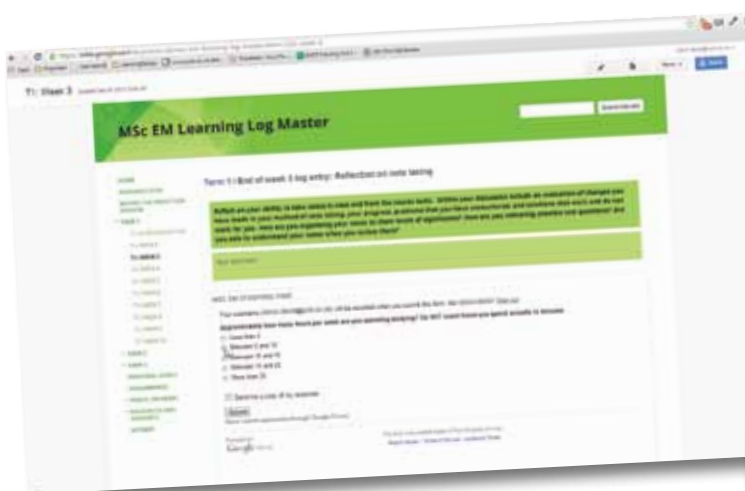
"The VLE forces you to use a content driven approach"

The Yorkshare VLE offers users a selection of tools to support most common teaching activities. Once these tools are in the hands of the instructor, it is entirely up to them what they do with them and how the online support for their teaching is arranged.

The starting point for many people using the VLE is often as a way to distribute files to the class but it doesn't mean you have to stop there. There are many examples of how the VLE and other e-learning tools have been used to support a range of innovative teaching approaches. Examples include problem or scenario based learning, where groups of students use blogs within the VLE to interact with other groups and respond to stimuli provided in seminars, and student-driven research and collaboration projects where students create, curate and comment on content rather than passively consume it.

"Students do all their collaboration through Facebook"

According to UCAS, 92% of 2013's incoming students have Facebook accounts.¹ While it may be true that social networking sites play a central role in



Example of Google sites used for e-portfolios



The VLE is used to support PBL in Politics

you go blind!"

supporting many aspects of student lives, there is a growing body of evidence from research with York students, and across the sector, that many are uncomfortable about blurring the lines between their academic and personal lives (see Matt Cornock's article on p.10). Indeed this discomfort often grows to outright opposition at the thought of listing their lecturers amongst their online friends.

Many departments are now leveraging Google apps to support true collaboration amongst groups, providing students with a professional suite of tools, helping them build transferable, employability skills and allowing staff to become involved in the group work process rather than just see the end results.

"The VLE is clunky"

This is perhaps the number one complaint that we hear about any online learning platform we support, though we need some clarification of the term "clunky". Does "clunky" mean the aesthetics of sites in the VLE, workflows for performing common tasks or just a general gut reaction to a complex system that needs to achieve an awful lot?²

If we're talking about aesthetics, there are examples of how, with a bit of design know-how, staff have created great looking sites in the VLE that reflect the ethos of a module while still making it easy for students to find what they want. In some instances where "clunky" refers to the number of steps required to complete a task, then often greater levels of support can help staff identify the most efficient way to get something done.

In some cases, the general user experience within the VLE has not met with expectations of a modern online system. The user experience of *Yorkshare* VLE has improved significantly, notably with improvements to the text box editor and making files available, but there is still some way to go and we'll continue to push for improvements both to the available features and the way that established tools work for end users.

As discussed earlier, the VLE isn't the only option available to staff and in instances where the VLE's tool-set does not best support student engagement with the targeted online activities, then it might make sense to look for alternatives or consider how other platforms could

be deployed to deliver elements of the online aspects of course, perhaps working alongside the VLE.

Conclusion

We feel strongly that a successful central e-learning support service needs to listen, and be able to respond to our user community by updating the range of services and support we offer. The rollout of lecture capture, a dedicated app for mobile learning and the ongoing development of tools to support online assignment submission are just a few examples of how we have enhanced what we can offer in direct response to requests from the academic community.

We would like to work with staff to realise the full potential of the technology to support their teaching and get past some of the most common misconceptions. We will continue to offer training centrally and for departments on request, outlining the tools and approaches available to staff and pedagogic advice to support module design. We will continue to provide responsive, on-demand support for staff and students. Above all, we will continue to consult with individuals, teaching teams and departments to understand their requirements and help them to get

what they want, and their students need, from the technology available.

References

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Laurillard, Diana, "Rethinking university teaching: A conversational framework for the effective use of learning technologies", *Psychology Press*, 2002

- 1 <https://www.ucasmedia.com/news/2013/eight-out-of-ten-freshers-have-smartphones>
- 2 <https://www.blackboard.com/Platforms/Learn/Products/Blackboard-Learn/Features.aspx>



If you really want to read my essay... you can access it on my blog...

Simon Davis

is a member of the Forum committee and e-learning advisor for the central E-Learning Development Team. He has recently achieved his PGCAP qualification and his current focus is on departmental liaison and supporting module design and delivery enhanced with technology. Contact him at simon.davis@york.ac.uk



Using technology for learning: an innovation or an expectation?

Matt Cornock, VLE Co-ordinator, Department of Social Policy and Social Work (SPSW), considers why we should encourage innovation in technology-enhanced learning and what approaches we should take.

The use of technology for learning must always be pedagogically-driven. Being 'whizzy' is not enough to engage students towards a productive learning outcome, and we have to admit that in comparison to many students, we are likely to be trend-followers rather than trend-setters. If we look at the wider web, the internet has moved from a one-way publishing medium controlled by technical gatekeepers, to a place of user-generated content, where discussing, contributing and sharing is the norm. In a survey of our first years, the percentage of students using Twitter has risen from 16% to 51% in two years and this year, 1 in 6 students have uploaded videos to YouTube. If more of our students are used to a two-way interaction with the internet, then the 'publishing' of our lecture slides for them to consume is only a partial realisation of our technology-enhanced learning potential. As their feedback tells us, students know that too. Hence, using technology for education must invite a rewarding learning experience, rather than solely being about using what we perceive to be the latest online tool.

Know your students

It's understandable then that the use of technology for learning may be seen as a risky unknown, requiring a leap-of-faith just to dip one's toe. In SPSW, using the knowledge we gain from induction surveys, specific questions on the VLE in module evaluations and feedback from student reps, we are able to try out new approaches with technology from an informed position. This investigation also flags up new opportunities to explore, such as the in-class use of tablets or laptops (owned by 98% of our first years), or the need to support students' use of digital resources without printing (see our Reading On Screen site developed with the ELDT at <http://bit.ly/ros-r>). Drawing upon local data and feedback has enabled us to tailor our technology-enhanced learning approach to our student mix.

In the process it has challenged our assumptions about students' relationship with technology.

Case in practice

Dr Aniela Wenham is one of our pioneers, utilising Facebook and Wordpress (a free, public blogging tool) for specific learning activities in two undergraduate modules. However, not all students were able or willing to use these tools. From our induction surveys, even though students' use of Facebook was near ubiquitous, we were able to identify that training on managing students' online identity and clear guidance about how tutors and students should engage in this social/study space needed to be offered to address potential anxiety. With the experimental 'risks' accounted for, using these platforms we were able to embed interaction with guest speakers throughout the term, ensuring a continuous link between academic study and real-world practice (see <http://bit.ly/spsw-cyp-blog-a>). This interaction would simply not be possible without the use of online tools.

In the same boat

Our evaluations showed that training or guidance for every tool is important. Where problems occur for students is when the technology forms a barrier and becomes noticeable to the detriment of the learning objective. For example, some students suggested that commenting on a Wordpress blog posts was not obvious and in other feedback the layout of the VLE was too busy. Guidance was available, but the nuances of the interface made it unintuitive. It may contradict our assumptions, but students have the same training and development needs as staff in how to use technology; a view supported in the NUS report on 'Student Perspectives on Technology' (NUS/HEFCE 2010, <http://bit.ly/1ebSB9H>).

Going forward

Understanding your students' experience



I had thought of using You Tube but I don't know the nearest station...

of technology will inform your approach to technology-enhanced learning. Every cohort in every department will be different. In the same way that you may tweak an in-class activity or lecture year-on-year, the online component should develop too. Drawing upon student data and feedback, and reflecting on their own designs has enabled our teaching staff to develop their approach to using online tools. Where there are lessons learnt applicable to all activities such as the importance of adding contextual introductions and well-formatted instructions, scaffolding and directly linking to classroom-based teaching or assessment, the more adventurous use of technology will always be changing. There is a need to be iterative in how you are innovative.

Matt Cornock supports students and advises staff on technology-enhanced learning.



He holds a PGCert in Online and Distance Education and is a Certified Member of the Association of Learning Technologists. Matt's recent projects and case studies from SPSW are available online at <http://bit.ly/mc-write-ups>

The Employability Tutorial:

Supporting students' career development through the Yorkshire VLE

Chris Millson writes about how Careers have developed their online resources and are now reaching a wider and broader group of students, aiming to offer support to all students to help them make the most of their time at York, and to plan for their future.

The Employability Tutorial – a self-study resource in the Yorkshire VLE (www.york.ac.uk/careers/vle) was launched in Autumn 2011. One of the aims of the Tutorial is to help supervisors to support their students' career/personal development, by encouraging students to access the Tutorial, and discussing students' plans in supervision. Each year, around 7,000 students access the Tutorial, and we have found that students who have not accessed services from *Careers* are more likely to do so after accessing the Tutorial. We know that the Tutorial can be improved, so we listen to students and staff, and make annual improvements to it.

This academic year sees the biggest improvements to the Tutorial yet. As well as *Careers* Advisers and other *Careers* staff being involved in updating the content, we recruited an excellent student intern, Chris Barnes, who worked with us for three months over the summer, developing and improving activities in the Tutorial. This article will introduce some of these changes – but if you are interested, click on 'Employability Tutorial' in the VLE (all staff have access) and have a look, see our guidance for departments (tinyurl.com/etdepts), or contact us.

Making it personal

We believe that employability is about the individual, and what they want to achieve. Students will naturally be at different stages in their career planning and development. Therefore, the Tutorial is split into eight short sections, which students can choose to use if and when they are relevant. To help students see which areas may be useful, we have added a 'Getting started' quiz, which asks a few questions, then suggests relevant sections and resources.

Students can add actions following each section, and can access their Action Plan any time through the VLE.

Each section of the updated Tutorial contains new activities, which focus on the student. For example, in 'My skills', students can list skills which are important to them – by choosing from our suggestions, or adding anything they choose. The student can rate their confidence for each skill, and record examples – to track their development, and for use in application processes.

Making it happen

At the end of each section, students can add actions, eg to develop a particular skill this year. All of this information is summarised in the student's Employability Plan, which is shared and discussed with their supervisor. Supervisors receive an email when a Plan is shared, and they can view these online or print them out.

In last year's Tutorial, this process spanned multiple separate activities, and required students to summarise their results. Now, activities use information from previous activities, and a summary is automatically updated in the student's Employability Plan.

These new activities are found in

In 'My skills', students can choose skills they care about, rate their confidence in each area, and mark where they have examples.

every section of the Tutorial, for example: listing career options of interest in 'Options after graduation', and a pros/cons/unknowns activity in 'How to choose a career', which helps students to make decisions.

Providing better services

We are tailoring activities for different groups of students. For example, we have improved information on postgraduate study, in response to student feedback. In the York Law School, skills activities use a list of competencies relevant to Law students.

The new activities also allow us to generate anonymous statistics on students' skills, priorities and career ideas. For example, 80% of over 200 students listing their priorities in early Autumn Term listed 'Doing something I enjoy', whereas only 5% listed 'A particular employer/institution'. In time, these statistics may help us to improve our services to meet the needs of a wider range of students.

Chris Millson manages *Careers' e-Learning support* as Online Training Manager. His interests include social media and web technology, and he is a trustee of the Centre for Recording Achievement. He studied Physics at the University of Oxford and has lived in Japan. Contact him at chris.millson@york.ac.uk



Introduction

The recent VLE retender and consultation exercise on e-learning requirements for the University led to much discussion on the future direction of e-learning at York, resulting in the *Vision statement for e-learning*, approved by University Teaching Committee in June 2013. This repositions our e-learning ambitions from the original vision (2004), which focused on VLE implementation as part of the learning and teaching (L&T) supporting infrastructure and its capacity to support growth in student numbers through the delivery of more flexible modes of study and efficiencies in management of L&T.

Whilst all this remains true and the VLE now assumes a central role in supporting the student experience in L&T activities, looking to the future we may aspire to broader and more student-focused uses of learning technology. Developments in e-learning provision will have implications for staff development – specifically academic digital literacies and proficiency in the use of different types of learning technologies ('VLE plus...') – and will require the University to join up service provision in a more effective way, so we can support campus-based and off-site learning in a seamless fashion, as explained below...

E-learning was once synonymous with the use of institutional learning management systems or virtual learning environments (VLEs) to provide online content resources to students. Institutional approaches to online learning have moved on to embrace the full range of L&T opportunities that technology provides, focusing more on development of interactive content and learning activities which facilitate a student-centred approach to L&T (UCISA, 2012a).

We are therefore due a change of language in the way we describe our own use of learning technologies in support of L&T. Across the UK HE sector e-learning has largely been dropped as a term in favour of *technology-enhanced learning*, or as simply put in the last HEFCE (2009) statement on e-learning – '*the broader opportunities offered through the use of technology*'.

At York the e-learning portfolio of services may help students to prepare for classroom activities and to engage more actively in lecture sessions through in-

The future of e-learning at York

Richard Walker reports



class polling, quizzes and communication back channels to the instructor. As Arenas (2008) has observed, through the use of learning technologies we may also support students outside the classroom, helping them to develop their skills in planning, organising, self-monitoring, self-teaching and self-evaluating their learning, in this way assisting them to extend and reinforce their learning beyond the classroom. The challenge for us is to join up these different uses of technology in a coherent fashion, so that the interconnectedness of learning spaces, devices and technologies and modes of learning is supported in our L&T provision to students within and beyond the institution.

In practical terms, what does this mean for York?

In terms of service provision, we need to improve our support for students' mobile devices, so they can effortlessly connect to institutional online services on and off-campus.

From a course design and delivery perspective, it will require academics to master a broader set of tools, developing

their digital competencies and understanding of the potential of these technologies to support student learning. Take mobile learning as an example. We have observed the increasing use by students of personal devices to support their learning, focusing on creative uses of technology to promote information and knowledge sharing, as well as networking activities (UCISA, 2012b), which can also be exploited in our teaching approaches. Central to this new approach is the emphasis on the use of technology to empower the learner, giving students more control of and responsibility for their learning and development. This offers the possibility for staff to 'design in' to their teaching 'participant-controlled' learning activities which engage students in active learning outside formal contact hours.

The E-Learning Development Team's key responsibility will be to continue to support staff in both technical and pedagogic design challenges of adopting new technologies, so we can maximise the benefits of new ways of L&T for our students now and in the future.

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- UCISA, (a) 2012 Survey of Technology Enhanced Learning
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- University of York (2004), *Virtual Learning Environment: Statement of Requirements*

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Using Innovative Technologies in the Psychology in Education Programme at the University of York

Rob Klassen and Claudine Bowyer-Crane on the use of technology in a new programme

PiE and PERC at York

The Psychology in Education (PiE) BSc is a programme in the Department of Education that links the study of psychology with the study of education, allowing students to apply psychological theory and research to real-life settings, especially involving children, adolescents, and schools. Accredited by the British Psychological Society, this programme provides students with a unique set of skills spanning two dynamic disciplines and appeals to students considering careers or further study in psychology, education, or research. Developing this new programme provided a great opportunity to consider ways in which we could incorporate new technological applications into teaching and learning activities...

The PiE programme is set up in parallel with the new Psychology in Education Research Centre (PERC) which offers applied psychological research with firmly embedded educational applications. Postgraduate students supervised by PERC academic staff are working on a range of research topics with a particular emphasis on psychological aspects of teaching and learning, and often using new technologies to advance their work.

New technologies for studying teaching and learning

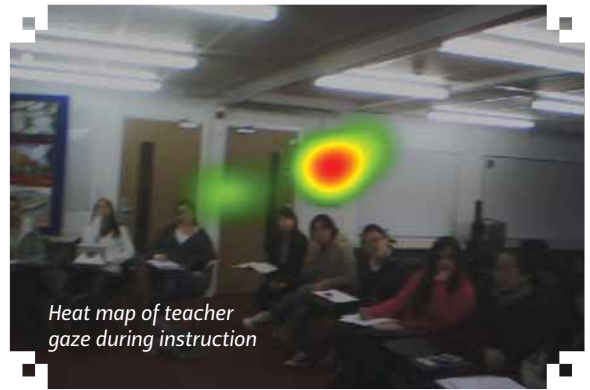
The undergraduate PiE programme is new for 2013/14 and our first cohort have started their journey to integrate psychological knowledge with the challenges inherent in educational settings. However, several of our new postgraduate students in PERC have jumped right in to using new technologies to study the processes of teaching and learning. For example, ESRC PhD Nora McIntyre and MA (research) student Emma Campbell are working with Rob to study the ways that teachers and students interact in the classroom using mobile gaze-trackers and unobtrusive 'glasses-style' directional cameras. Nora is focusing on how teachers' visual and verbal behaviours reflect thinking and knowing during teaching, and Emma is studying how children with learning difficulties visually engage with the teaching environment. Both are using new technologies and are

directly focused on building a better understanding of teaching and learning behaviours in classrooms.

The research work using mobile gaze-trackers is based on the notion that gaze patterns can provide insight into inner processes underlying teaching and learning. Visual interactions play a key role in social interaction in the classroom, and our students are using mobile eye-tracking devices to study how teacher and student visual (and verbal) behaviours are related to classroom activities. Current research shows that gaze reflects social attention and regulates social interactions in classrooms; furthermore, expert teachers may display different gaze patterns than novices. Studying visual attention and interactions in classrooms provides insight into cognitive and social engagement and may lead to a new understanding of how teacher behaviours lead to positive academic and social outcomes for students.

Other technology use in Psychology in Education

We have a set of Galaxy tablets which allow students to carry out fieldwork in settings like school classrooms, staff rooms, and even playgrounds, where laptop computers may not be readily available or practical for use. In addition, new experimental paradigms can be developed for staff and student research using tablet technology. For example, Claudine is working with a student intern to develop an app-based vocabulary measure for use with children learning English as an Additional Language. This and similar paradigms can be used for student dissertation projects. We also have a touch screen laptop for use in staff and student research projects and Claudine is designing an experiment using the eprime experiment generator that measures children's ability to generate inferences during reading by matching text to pictures on the screen. Using the touch screen laptop provides a more direct measure of response time than a keyboard or button



Heat map of teacher gaze during instruction

box setup. This and similar paradigms will be used in student research projects.

Together PiE and PERC are using a set of new technologies that engage undergraduate and postgraduate students in interesting learning activities, and will lead to new understandings in the inner workings of teaching and learning practices.

Rob Klassen is Professor and Chair of the Psychology and Education Research Centre. His work focuses



on the development of motivation in teachers and students, frequently using cross-cultural comparisons. Klassen is currently working on two projects: investigating teacher-student interactions using innovative technologies, and developing non-cognitive measures to predict teaching effectiveness.

Claudine Bowyer-Crane is a Senior Lecturer in Psychology in Education and programme leader for



the BSc Psychology in Education. Her research focuses on reading and language development and disorders, and in particular on designing and evaluating school based interventions to support young children's language development. Her current work looks at the efficacy of school-based intervention for children who are learning English as an additional language.

Tweeting about the past in class

or, what Twitter makes possible for students and teachers

Sara Perry, Director of Studies, Digital Heritage, Department of Archaeology

I have been using Twitter in my research and teaching since 2011 when, as a PhD student, I was compelled to open an account to facilitate dialogue at an academic archaeological event that I was coordinating. Following the path of many new users of Twitter, I reluctantly took up the medium, but then very quickly became enamoured by its utility and potential. By the logic of the instructional designer Daniel Lynds, who documents the five-stage trajectory of student engagement with Twitter (from reluctance to confusion, awareness, acceptance and then engagement), I had speedily become a true convert.

There is no lack of evidence to testify to the power of this medium. Twitter appears to be the go-to point for journalistic investigators themselves,

and its role in exposing critical news stories and, indeed, facilitating full public revolt has led some to label its users (and those who employ other mobile and social media) as the “fifth estate” – a networked, citizen-led check on the establishment.

At a more local, or discipline-specific level, Twitter can also have subtler impacts, making possible the sharing of new ideas and methodologies in near-instantaneous fashion, and the cultivation of an interested and active mix of audiences who might never have otherwise interacted. Particularly in my speciality area – digital heritage – where novel technologies and programmes for recording, analysing, presenting, performing and catalysing debate about

the past (in tangible and intangible forms) are rapidly evolving, Twitter is one of a host of online media that make these developments known in a timely fashion. The traditional publication model, by contrast, is grievously lacking, for by the time digital heritage research is disseminated in such conventional forums, it is effectively obsolete.

Beyond mere publication however, and with its ‘fifth estate’ capacity in mind, I’ve also seen Twitter used as a force for change and necessary critique of heritage institutions and dubiously-informed – but often ubiquitous – heritage policies and practices. The #freearchaeology hashtag, initiated by a MSc Digital Heritage student from York, Emily Johnson, is one important example. Emily’s concern about the pervasive

Sara Perry has worked at the intersections of archaeology and visual anthropology for the past decade, studying the means by which archaeologists present the past to academic and non-academic audiences. She sits on the board of the Society for Visual Anthropology and the Histories of Archaeology Research Network, and she acts on the advisory committee of University College London’s Centre for Audio-Visual Study and Practice in Archaeology. Contact her at sara.perry@york.ac.uk @archaeologistsp



What sort of power supply did it run on?

and undercutting nature of unpaid and volunteer labour in archaeology was quickly taken up by a vast international audience through Twitter, a sparkplug for what has now become a substantial debate.

There is an active community of Twitter users among the archaeological and heritage sectors which, as demonstrated by UCL's Lorna Richardson, now numbers in the thousands. But evidence suggests that this demographic is somewhat insular, and more pertinently for my purposes, the scale of archaeology/heritage student users applying Twitter for learning is unclear. Indeed, a recent Twitter conversation to which I was a party explicitly questioned whether it was possible to really apply the medium productively with students.



Twitter can also have subtler impacts, making possible the sharing of new ideas and methodologies in near-instantaneous fashion.

My response, however, was an emphatic YES.

I say this not only because of the phenomenal response that Emily's received to her #freearchaeology debate, which positioned her as a spokesperson for change amongst already-established professionals only a few months into her Master's degree. In this circumstance, she's been able to have a true and immediate influence on global communities of practice which would not have been possible through traditional means of classroom-based interaction. But aside from her experiences, Twitter has also enabled the intellectual engagement of other students of mine who might not otherwise have felt the confidence or had the opportunity to contribute. This is particularly true of some of my Master's cohorts where the number of students is large (35-50) and, hence, opportunities for students to directly interact with every one of their peers and guest lecturers are restricted. In this context, Twitter has provided a significant forum to share resources, prepare for classes and assessments, and

communicate immediately with those we are studying and learning from.

I am not naïve about the potential dangers and pitfalls of Twitter. Its problems are most obvious in archaeology through the experiences of the Cambridge Classics Professor and *Times* blogger Mary Beard, whose far-reaching sexual and personal harassment on Twitter has been well publicised. To a much lesser extent, I've been subject to similar abusive communications, and in response have initiated the joint University of York - University of Southampton Gender & Digital Culture Project. That project has been investigating the scope and nature of online abuse through social media experienced by students and professionals in and beyond the academic sector, and it complements other work that is pushing for institutional safeguards for users of digital tools like Twitter.

There are means and models available to mitigate risks, most notably JISC's *Legal Guidance for ICT Use in Education, Research and External Engagement*. Universities and their supporting institutional infrastructure have an important role to play in monitoring and immediately responding to both those risks and their perpetrators. And I can attest to the fact that investing in such response is worth the effort. Twitter is one among several social media whose impact on the classroom – and on the production of knowledge and the fifth estate more generally – can be profound. I hope you'll join the conversation.

NEWS

National Student Survey 2014

The tenth National Student Survey (NSS) will start on Monday 20 January 2014 and run until 30 April, conducted by Ipsos MORI. Our final-year students will be contacted and asked for their views on the quality of the teaching, assessment, personal development and support they have experienced, the organisation and management within their department, and the quality of the learning resources to which they have access.

This year, the University has decided that five banks of additional questions will be used to gather student views on careers, course content and structure, course delivery, assessment and their opportunities to provide feedback. We will also ask one institutional question to find out what particular experience has been most rewarding or useful, and what one change would most improve their course. As in previous years, the University will donate £1 to the Student Hardship Fund for each survey completed.

All departments are asked to publicise the survey, which can be found at www.thestudentsurvey.com

For further information, see www.york.ac.uk/communications/internal/nss or please contact Jo Fox via email jo.fox@york.ac.uk

Funding Opportunities

Rapid Response Grants of up to £3,000 are available to support small-scale, short-term projects, initiatives or purchases to enhance the quality of learning and teaching by addressing a clearly identified need or issue.

Further details and application forms can be found at: <https://www.york.ac.uk/staff/teaching/funding-and-resources/funding>

Learning and Teaching Calendar of Events: Spring Term 2014

WEEK 1	
Wednesday 8 January, 14.15–16.15pm, H/G21	PhD Supervision (Sciences and Social Sciences)
WEEK 2	
Wednesday 15 January, 12.30–14.00pm, ATB/037	PhD Supervision (Arts and Humanities)
Thursday 16 January, 9.00am–16.30pm, H/G21	Marking Consistency
WEEK 3	
Wednesday 22 January, 14.00–15.30pm, V/044	Staff Turnitin Workshop
WEEK 4	
Wednesday 29 January, 12.30–14.00pm, AEW/004	EdTech – Twitter in the Academic Environment
Wednesday 29 January, 14.15–16.15pm, H/G21	Approaching Ethics in Academic Practice
WEEK 5	
Friday 7 February, 09.00am–12.00 noon, RCH/017	Academic Integrity Workshop
WEEK 6	
Monday 10 February, 12.30–14.00pm, H/G21	Successful Teaching Encounters: Small Group Work
Wednesday 12 February, 14.15–16.15pm, H/G21	Employability in the Curriculum
Friday 14 February, 12.00–14.00pm, H/G21	Effective Lecturing (Sciences and Social Sciences)
WEEK 7	
Tuesday 18 February, 9.00am–16.30pm, RCH042 Study Pod 1	Criticality
WEEK 8	
Monday 24 February, 12.30–14.00pm, H/G21	PBL in Action
Monday 24 February, 10.00–11.30am, LMB/037x	Staff Turnitin Workshop
Wednesday 26 February, 14.15–16.15pm, H/G09	Issues of Academic Conduct
Wednesday 26 February, 14.15–16.15pm, H/G21	Using your Voice Most Effectively
WEEK 9	
Wednesday 5 March, 09.00am–17.00pm, H/G21	Micro Teaching
WEEK 10	
Monday 10 March, 12.30–14.00pm, H/G17	Module 2 Assessment Support Session
Monday 10 March, 14.00–16.30pm, H/G21	Taught Masters SIG
Wednesday 12 March, 14.15–16.15pm, RCH Lakehouse	Understanding Your Market: Recruiting New Students
WEEK 11	
Monday 17 March, 9.00am–16.30pm, H/G17	Written Assessment, Marking and Feedback
Tuesday 18 March, 12.30–14.00pm, H/G21	Oral Assessment: the value of vivas?

Key to the calendar

Events organised by the Learning and Teaching Forum. Open to all staff and PGWTs. For further information, see www.york.ac.uk/staff/teaching/sharing/sharing-practice/workshops; to register, contact janet.barton@york.ac.uk. If you are unable to attend an event but would like a copy of the materials, please let Janet know.

Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice (PGCAP) sessions. Priority is given to staff enrolled on the programme, but other staff are invited to express an interest in attending any session and places will be confirmed a week or two before the event. For further information, see www.york.ac.uk/admin/hr/academic-practice/pgcap/workshops.cfm.

Academic Integrity: Staff Turnitin awareness sessions. Please contact adrian.lee@york.ac.uk for further details or to book your place on a session.

Taught Masters Special Interest Group: for further information, see www.york.ac.uk/staff/teaching/sharing/sharing-practice/special-interest; to register contact janet.barton@york.ac.uk.

Freestanding workshops offered by learning support colleagues. Please contact janet.barton@york.ac.uk for further details or to book your place.