

THE JAMES MARTIN
21ST CENTURY SCHOOL
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

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Blog

Rethinking science and technology for the 21st century
Posted At : March 16, 2009 4:27 PM
Related Categories: Governance,Seminars

We are now so dependent on science and technology that, without it, our civilisation could not survive. If global society is to continue to mature and prosper, we have to approach science and technology innovation in the right way. On 12 March 2009, Dr Andrew Maynard, Chief Science Advisor to the Project on Emerging Nanotechnologies at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, ...

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How much can ethical certification achieve?
Posted At : March 10, 2009 12:35 PM
Related Categories: Governance,Seminars

Recent years have seen a rapid proliferation in the number of ethical

POST CATEGORIES

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Blogs

Using blogs in learning and teaching

To provide a personal or team record of thoughts and ideas, learning experiences, field notes, project diaries, research progress and other reflections, in a format accessible on the web.

Description

Weblogs (or *blogs*) usually contain diary style content, with updates posted on a regular basis and displayed in reverse chronological order. They often have a single author but group blogs are increasingly common for project or research groups. The content or use of a blog is the choice of the author and may include news, updates, articles, musings and reflections. Most blogging tools make it easy to include audio, images, video and links to other sites so you can easily annotate or recommend materials on the web.

It is also possible to register your blog with newsfeed services to automatically alert interested parties to new content on the blog.

There are two main activities associated with blogs and blogging:

1. Reading existing blogs
2. Writing your own blog

Blogging is a very easy and useful way to maintain a record of your activities. As blogs are now so common they act as important sources of up to date information. Information on a blog is made instantly available as bloggers post new entries. There are many leading academics who actively blog and can provide trustworthy sources of current opinion and information.

Students sometimes use blogs to record and reflect on their learning experiences, whether in the classroom or tutorials. Its personal nature facilitates the inclusion of aspects that may lie outside of the usual formal learning and teaching spaces. You can opt to keep the entries private or to allow others to comment on what you've written, thereby encouraging critical reflection.

In project work, it can be used for you to keep track of thoughts and ideas, create a written record of learning, jot notes following meetings,

and generally support the flow of information. It is an ideal way of providing you with content or basic notes that can be written up later on for more formal documentation such as reports.

If you are an academic you can set up a blog to act as a kind of electronic tutorial room into which you invite your students to read it and contribute to it. This enables you to set up a tool to reflect progress and development and a dialogue that fosters the exchange of ideas. It can be a forum for discussing any topic and which permits contributions from everyone involved. This can enable all involved to come to the next face-to-face meeting or tutorial much more prepared and ready to debate.

Getting started

For blogging with your students to support a course or tutorial series there is a blogging tool available in WebLearn. To blog publicly, you need to find a blog hosting site, for which there are a number of freely available services. One way to discover how easy it is to blog is to go to <http://blogger.com> and follow the instructions. If you have a blog at Oxford you can advertise it to the world on the University of Oxford Blogs page of the Oxford University website: <http://www.ox.ac.uk/blogs.html>

Some uses of blogs at Oxford.

- Post course notices and course related news items in your blog.
- Keep colleagues peers and interested readers up to date.
- Provide insights into your own research activity for students to read.
- Publicise and disseminate your work to the public.
- Post your reflections on course related topics linking to topical stories that illustrate real-world implications.
- Build a 'frequently asked questions' resource. Students can use the comment facility to ask questions which can then be answered for the group.

Once you have started reading the blogs of colleagues or students you may wish to use a *newsfeed reader*, such as the Bloglines service (<http://bloglines.com/>) to subscribe to a feed (or channel), delivering new content from that blog.

You can also read blogs via newsfeeds in WebLearn.

Learn more

Robin Mason and **Frank Rennie** (2008) **e-Learning and Social Networking Handbook**: Routledge

This document is part of a larger set aimed at introducing the reader to a wide range of technologies. Please visit this web page for more information:

<http://www.oucs.ox.ac.uk/ltg/>

Your primary support for IT issues comes from your department or college. If you would like advice on using blogs in learning and teaching at Oxford please contact OUCS.