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October issue

Issue 29, October 2015

A monthly newsletter for UCL E-Learning Champions, and anyone else interested in learning technology, in five sections: **Need To Know**, **Learning**, **What's on**, **Tech Focus** and **Questions**. Please pass around and ask colleagues to subscribe via the link at the bottom.

Need to know

Don't forget to reset your Moodle courses

If you're about to start teaching a new cohort of students, don't forget to reset your course to remove last year's students and their assessments, grades and forum posts. The reset can be completed in 3 simple steps.

Once this year's students start contributing it will be problematic to remove last year's students and their contributions, so act now.

[Find out how to reset here...](#)

Learning

E-Learning Case Study

This resource walks you through the key decision points you need to consider when beginning to use technology (to engage students) within the lecture hall.

Based on his experience within medical education Dr James Pickering, [Times Higher Education Awards](#) Most Innovative Teacher of the Year award winner (2014), offers a simple walk through highlighting the lessons he has learnt. He offers suggestions for using data to evaluate learning interventions. He also provides top tips and explores some examples of best practice, making this a great resource to get you started with incorporating technology into your practice.

[Find out how to start using technology in your teaching...](#)

UCL Student Blog

Moira Wright and Jess Gramp from E-Learning Environments (ELE) have launched the 'UCL Student Blog' pages (working title).

For the first time, students have the opportunity to have their short reviews published on the UCL Blog pages.



The project is looking for interested staff and students to get involved from across the university to become an army of bloggers – co-creating content for their course as well gaining valuable digital skills.

[Find out more and sign up...](#)

[Sign up to the UCL Teaching and Learning newsletter](#) to read news, features, practical information and a column by the Vice-Provost (Education).

What's on (and what's gone...)

UCL Arena Digital Unit 3: How can we involve students with Campus Pack blogs, wikis and podcasts?

UCL Arena Digital Unit 3 will run October 19th – 30th 2015.



Campus Pack is now available in UCL Moodle. It provides a suite of tools comprising blogs, journals, wikis and podcasts that can be used to support students' reflective, social learning and collaboration, as well as enabling tutors and students to record audio directly into Moodle.

This unit will guide you through these new Moodle tools, and discuss ways of using them in your teaching.

The unit will last two weeks, taking 1-2 hours of your time, culminating in an interactive webinar which will allow you to explore advanced features and take a look at what colleagues are already doing with the tools.

A live webinar will run Wednesday 28st October 2015 2 – 3 pm.

[Access Arena Digital....](#)

Networking & dissemination at UCL

Arena Events

UCL Arena lays on a vibrant and varied [calendar of events](#).

One of these is Arena Exchange, seminars run by UCL colleagues for UCL colleagues. The organisers are on the look out for staff to outline examples of their successful work - [propose yours here](#).



Blended Learning Essentials: Getting Started

'[Blended Learning Essentials: Getting Started](#)' is a free course, run on the FutureLearn platform by a partnership between UCL Institute of Education and University of Leeds, along with a range of colleges and organisations.

The lead educator is Professor Diana Laurillard from UCL, and, while the course is

focused on vocational education, you will find much to connect with your own work. We are looking for interested staff to form a UCL cohort to take the course together.

The course will be in two parts, run over 8 weeks. The first part of the course 'Getting Started' will start on 2 November 2015.

We will be putting together a programme of events to support the UCL cohort and make links with teaching at UCL.

If you are interested in joining the UCL cohort [add your name](#) and [join the course at FutureLearn](#).

Tech focus

Did you know...?

Students have read-only access to Moodle News forums

A common misconception is that Moodle News forums allow students to communicate with their tutors and each other. However, News forums are set to only allow staff to post one-way announcements to their students.



Students cannot reply or post anything of their own, since news forums force subscribe course members, so that would mean participants would get inundated with emails, without being able to unsubscribe. Despite this, a lot of staff prompt their students to reply to news forum posts, however, this is technically impossible without changing permissions (which is not advised).

To allow students to communicate via Moodle, staff should set up an additional discussion forum on their course. By default, students will be able to post to this forum and can choose whether to subscribe to email alerts or not.

[Find out how to add discussion forums to your course...](#)

Questions

How do I run a weekly, hour-long text chat with 20 students?

We received a question about a platform for a weekly hour of real-time text chat with a cohort of around 20 students. The colleague was seeking something to accommodate a range of media contributions (links to resources) and to help make sense of the volume and diversity of contributions. Not every student was able to use Facebook.

We suggested a few possibilities:

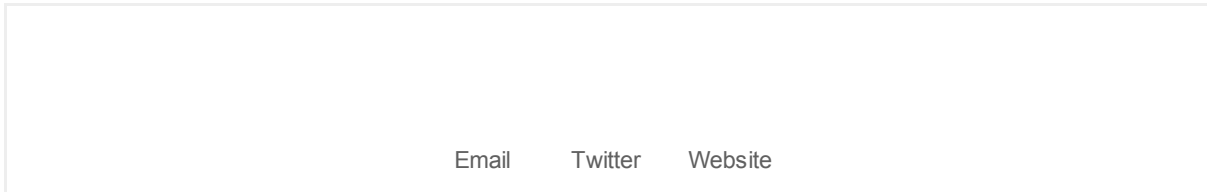
- [Moodle Hot Question](#) could help with sourcing and ordering topics in advance;
- [Padlet](#) or [Linoit](#) could be a place for sharing resources which does not require users to register;
- [Blackboard Collaborate](#) (available via Moodle) could allow the moderator(s) to use voice and video, while students use the text chat feature.
- A [Twitter chat](#) could work well if all students were willing to create accounts.
- [Storify](#) could help to in-gather and organise materials students have posted in different social media. Students could take charge of this curation activity.

Have you got ideas or experience here?

If so, please do share them, either [via the Twitter hashtag #elearningUCL](#) or via the [E-Learning Champions forum](#).

Image credits

Playing with blue fire. Photo credit: [Zeta](#) via [photopin cc](#)



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Questions or comments? Email E-Learning Environments at ele@ucl.ac.uk or call the ISD Service Desk 020 7679 5000 (ext. 25000).

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