

## EXPLORING THE BLOGOSPHERE: USES OF BLOGS IN EDUCATION

### What Is A Blog?

**Blog** - (weB LOG). A blog is basically a journal that is available on the web. The activity of updating a blog is *blogging* and someone who keeps a blog is a *blogger*. Blogs are typically updated daily using software that allows people with little or no technical background to update and maintain the blog. Postings on a blog are almost always arranged in chronological order with the most recent additions featured most prominently.

Blogs typically link to other websites and blog postings, and many allow readers to comment on the original post, thereby allowing audience discussions.

### Why blog?

As with most new technologies, the potential uses of blogs are limited only by personal imagination. Nevertheless, it is important to think about the pedagogical reasons why you might use blogs in your teaching. A blog site can provide the basis for the following:

- discipline-specific blog
- networking and knowledge sharing
- posting instructional tips for students
- posting course announcements and providing links to readings
- providing annotated links
- knowledge management
- a potential component of e-portfolios
- writing reflective journals
- assignment submission and review
- a site for group – work dialogue
- sharing course-related resources
- a site to develop or demonstrate particular graduate qualities and skills.

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### How to blog

#### *At USQ:*

USQs learning management system, *Moodle*, provides opportunities for course leaders to establish blog environments within courses. Contact LTSU/ICT for assistance.

#### *Via the web:*

Little technical knowledge is required to start and maintain a blog. A number of free websites offer templates, and provide simple steps for academics and students to blog. For up to date examples check the LTSU Website.

#### *(Inter)national blogging with peers:*

There are a number of blogs running that engage academic peers in discussion of learning and teaching issues. For example,

- The American 'Inside Higher Education', which offers a number of different blogs:  
<http://www.insidehighered.com/views/blogs>

### **Further Reading**

Bruns, A. & Jackson, J. (eds) (2006) *Uses of Blogs*, New York, Peter Lang.

