

27 Top tips for embedding Moodle VLE into your College - Geoff Rebbeck – Thanet College – November 2005

Marketing the College

1. Open Day Marketing

Project course activity and NLN materials from courses onto a high wall to show prospective students and parents what students study. Provides a colourful and moving backdrop.

Into the Community

2. Bringing in Employers

Create an Employer Engagement site as part of College's A4BC.

Invite Employers to visit courses as guests to see what apprentices and other employees are doing on courses.

Invite Employers to answer questions in an online chat tutorial about their vocational experience.

3. Assessing candidates for employment

Create an incomplete course area with tasks asking candidates to construct a learning episode on any aspect of learning or subject relevant to the interview. This tests the candidates ILT/IT ability and approaches to learning.

Improving teaching & Learning

4. What I have learnt as Journal entries

In the last 10 minutes of an hour's lesson or 20 minutes of a 2-hour lesson, ask students to complete a reflective log of what activity they have completed in the lesson, what they have learned and how it has changed their understanding of the subject. (Demonstrating attainment). Tutors can add their own Journal as a record of post lesson reflection.

5. Chats for support

Provide online tutorial for any student midway between weekly lessons or during holidays to support assignments and class work. Distance learners can be given weekly tutorial support.

6. Using message boards in social constructivism

Students attach work-based products to messages that they post to each other using critical thinking to explain function and purpose. All students reply creating a market place of discussion

Involving all the Staff

7. Tutor Forum course meetings

Using the tutor forum area that is unavailable to students, tutors can discuss in real time course admin issues and student related problems rather than hold two-termly meetings. All tutors are involved in problems and an administrative record is created for the module course.

8. Curriculum & Service area Reviews

Curriculum reviews by academic section can be run through a community. Senior managers can be enrolled. Relevant papers, Agendas, meeting dates and reference papers

9. Administrators group

can be stored in the site. Comments and observations can be posted and written submission posted and shared with others. The real value is getting all managers at some point to use the VLE.

Groups of Administrators & course creators can be established as a means of creating a forum of movers and groovers to share good ideas and practice.

Extending the College walls

10. Bringing in local schools, other tutors and students from elsewhere

14 –16 students from local schools can be supported in school and home for their vocational course via the VLE. Open source allows accounts from non-college account holders. Course and Modules become learning communities as the range of people in the area broadens.

Preparing for the Future

11. Modularisation E Kent common platform

Colleges will find many easy opportunities to technologically exploit the sharing of a common learning platform. Coalescence of college activity around the sharing of a curriculum and its delivery could have profound advantages for student learning and profound challenges for College structures and culture. This includes sharing course administration

Supporting Students

12. Tutorial Sites

Where students are studying modules an overarching course area is established for all students that contains general information and tutorial records including ILPs.

13. Techdis Toolbar

The Techdis Toolbar is available on the Home page for student download and installation on the VLE.

14. Parents as guests

Parents can be invited into course areas as guests to view material, receive notices and speak to the Tutors.

15. Individual Learning Plans, & Progression Charts as Wikis

Wikis properties allow the creation of forms accessible by a student and all tutors to record confirmation. Wikis are excellent for ILP, ongoing tutorials, assessment criteria progression charts and alternatives to journal to record individual attainment.

Enriching the Student experience

16. Add in the Student's Union

Provide a course area for the student Union to use at their discretion. This provides a direct student voice available from the VLE login for every student.

17. Linking Libraries and E Libraries

The Libraries web OPAC and electronic Library ages are available directly from the Front Page to link the Curriculum to the College's Learning Resources.

18. NLN Object Indexing

The VLE provides an indexing facility for the NLN materials via 'insert object'.

19. German Collaboration

Students from any other College or school can be brought together for study groups to add value to learning. Languages and cultural differences can be explored in the context of

learning and assessment.

Student Entitlement

20. Prospective Students

▶ Prospective Students can be given access as guests to the course area, materials and activities and assignments prior to enrolling to get a taster of the Course.

21. Messaging: the loss leader

▶ The Messaging function of the VLE allows students and Tutors to message spontaneously scripts are preserved allowing one to one tutorials to be recorded on line. Messaging is used in great volume by students in social context. This is in itself a new student entitlement. It creates immediate VLE awareness for students and draws students into familiar use with the sites.

College Administration streamlining

22. Staff Induction

▶ Establish a course for new staff that can be completed prior to starting so staff enter the college with a library of college policies and procedures available plus issues such as HASAWA already covered. It can include a reporting procedure to allow new staff to contact personnel and Finance with information.

23. Health & Safety community

▶ Establish a HASAWA site and enrol all staff so a reporting, educating library facility is available to all staff.

24. Business Community

▶ Similar to the HASAWA site with the same reporting procedure but employers can be given access to the community with College staff responsible for Employer Engagement.

25. Give it a name

▶ As Moodle s Open source it is important to give it a 'cool' name rather than a descriptive technical name.

26. Chums on Line

▶ Create a community of Staff users drawn from every academic section of the college as a forum for discussion and news in the gainful development of the electronic curriculum.

27. Covering classes for colleagues

▶ Where staff have to cover classes in other departments, it is possible to see what has already been covered and to get a feel for the course that we would otherwise be going into blind. A relief tutor could be added to the course area temporarily, **in a non-editing capacity** including Agency staff temporarily

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