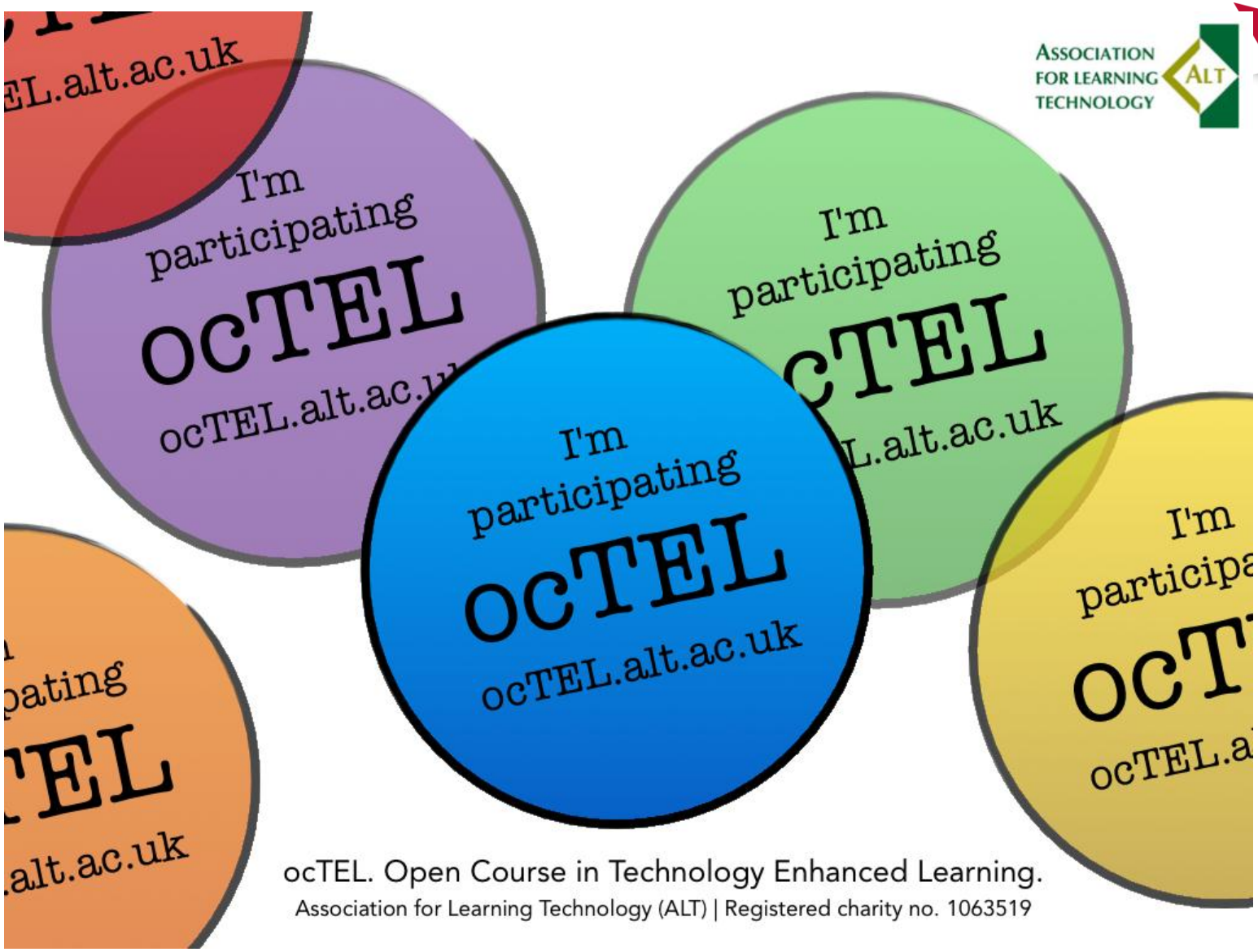


Available online http://octel.alt.ac.uk/course-materials/

Edinburgh Napier UNIVERSITY

Activity design for online learning

#ocTEL Week 3 Webinar

Keith Smyth @smythkrs
Edinburgh Napier University

Edinburgh Napier UNIVERSITY

What we'll cover

1. Exploring activity design
2. Designing for active engagement
3. Structuring activities across a course
4. Some concluding practical considerations

With time for discussion and questions as we go. But first…

But first, introductions

- I’m here...

- Who and where are you?

Edinburgh Napier UNIVERSITY

1. Exploring activity design

Edinburgh Napier UNIVERSITY

Brainstorm activity

- #ocTEL Week 3 has offered a number of different theories to support the design of online learning activities (including social constructivism, connectivism, PBL, experiential learning)

- Whatever your own theoretical leanings, what do you think is the main purpose of activity design either generally, or for online learning?

What is the purpose of activity design?

Answers on the whiteboard please...anything that you think might be relevant!

Edinburgh Napier UNIVERSITY

Engagement with the subject

Engagement with peers

Developing knowledge and skills

Providing structure to learning (and courses)

Assessing learning

Interaction with educational resources

Edinburgh Napier UNIVERSITY

A ‘convergence of affordances’

Constructivist principle	Technology	Potential affordance(s)
Exposure to multiple and competing perspectives	Hypertext material, asynchronous and synchronous tools	Rich understanding of concepts and issues, transferable knowledge
Reflective and self-gauging opportunities	Asynchronous discussion boards, online self-assessment	Increased participation in deeper exchange of views, metacognition
Collaborative learning including with experts	Asynch boards, virtual classrooms, Web 2.0	Engagement in complex tasks and within/across professional communities
‘Authentic’ knowledge and environments	Audio/video/animation/ simulations	Enhanced visualisation, assimilation, recall and knowledge transferability
Self-paced and needs-based learning	Web-based learning environments that integrate some or all of the above	More efficient and personally meaningful learning, at times most conducive to learning

Edinburgh Napier UNIVERSITY

But there are challenges

- While more educators are engaging in TEL within their practice, many of us are unsure about the kinds of activities that are most conducive to effective learning in online contexts

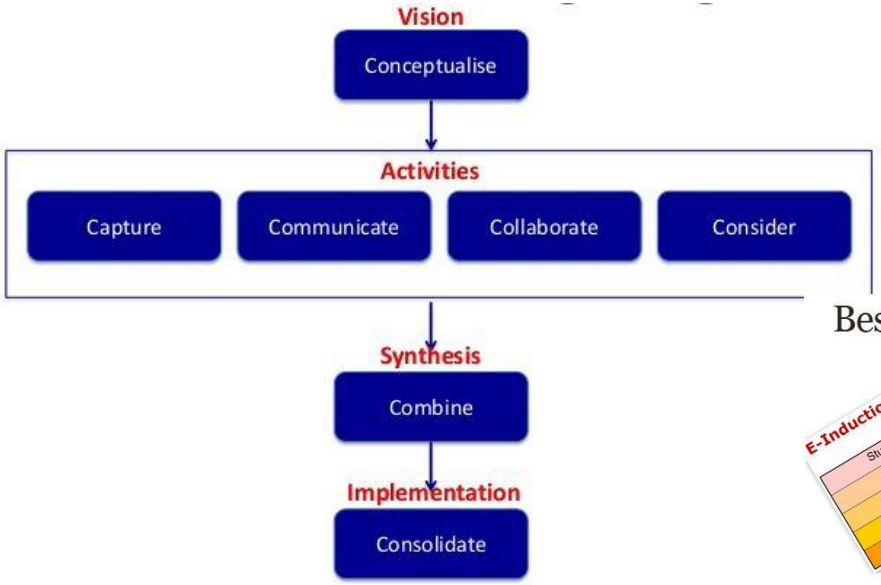
- To develop a practical appreciation of how effective technology-supported activities can be designed and implemented, we need to look first at the learning and teaching needs educators want to address in their practice

Edinburgh Napier UNIVERSITY

2. Designing for active engagement

Edinburgh Napier UNIVERSITY

Recommended models



Grainne Conole's
7C's of Learning Design
http://e4innovation.com/?p=628

Helen Walmsley's Best Practice Models for eLearning
http://learning.staffs.ac.uk/bestpracticemodels/

Background to the 3E Framework

- Originally developed as the 3E Approach on the cross-institutional FE-HE technology and transformation project TESEP (Transforming and Enhancing the Student Experience through Pedagogy)...where we quickly came to realise that ‘transformation’ is a troublesome concept!

- Used in the redesign of a range of modules and courses at various credit levels in FE and HE and across disciplines http://www2.napier.ac.uk/transform/transformation_pc.htm

Edinburgh Napier UNIVERSITY

- Academic Practice
- Business Engagement
- ELIR 2011
- HEREN (Hub for Education Research at Edinburgh Napier)
- Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy and Resource Bank
- Partnerships and Collaboration
- Pedagogy and learning technology: a practical guide
- Professional Development
- Programme Leadership
- Research Ethics
- Teaching Fellowship Scheme
- University benchmark for the use of technology in modules
- Feedback for Learning

2. Overview of 3E Framework

To assist staff with the practical implementation, a 3E Framework based on an Enhance-Extend-Empower continuum has been developed, with illustrative simple-but-effective examples that might be **incorporated as a minimum (Enhance)**, through to uses of technology that give students more responsibility for key aspects of their learning (Extend), and to underpin more sophisticated, authentic activities that reflect the professional environments for which they are preparing (Empower).

For those staff already using technology at the minimum Enhance level, then further developing practice at the Extend and Empower levels, where appropriate and desired, may be a natural progression. As an example, a possible application of the 3E Framework for encouraging early engagement in key concepts is provided below:

Enhance	Extend	Empower
Adopting technology in simple and effective ways to actively support students and increase their activity and self-responsibility	Further use of technology that facilitates key aspects of student's individual and collaborative learning and assessment through increasing their choice and control	Developed use of technology that requires higher order individual and collaborative learning that reflects how knowledge is created and used in the professional environment

Encouraging early engagement in key concepts

Have students take turns in defining one or two key terms or concepts for each week for inclusion in an online class glossary (e.g. in a wiki)	Have students work in pairs to create an online guide to a particular topic (e.g. a 'scavenger hunt' of places on the web for peers to explore)	The use of online resources (collaborative spaces, links to readings, video clips) that students can use in case and problem-based learning tasks

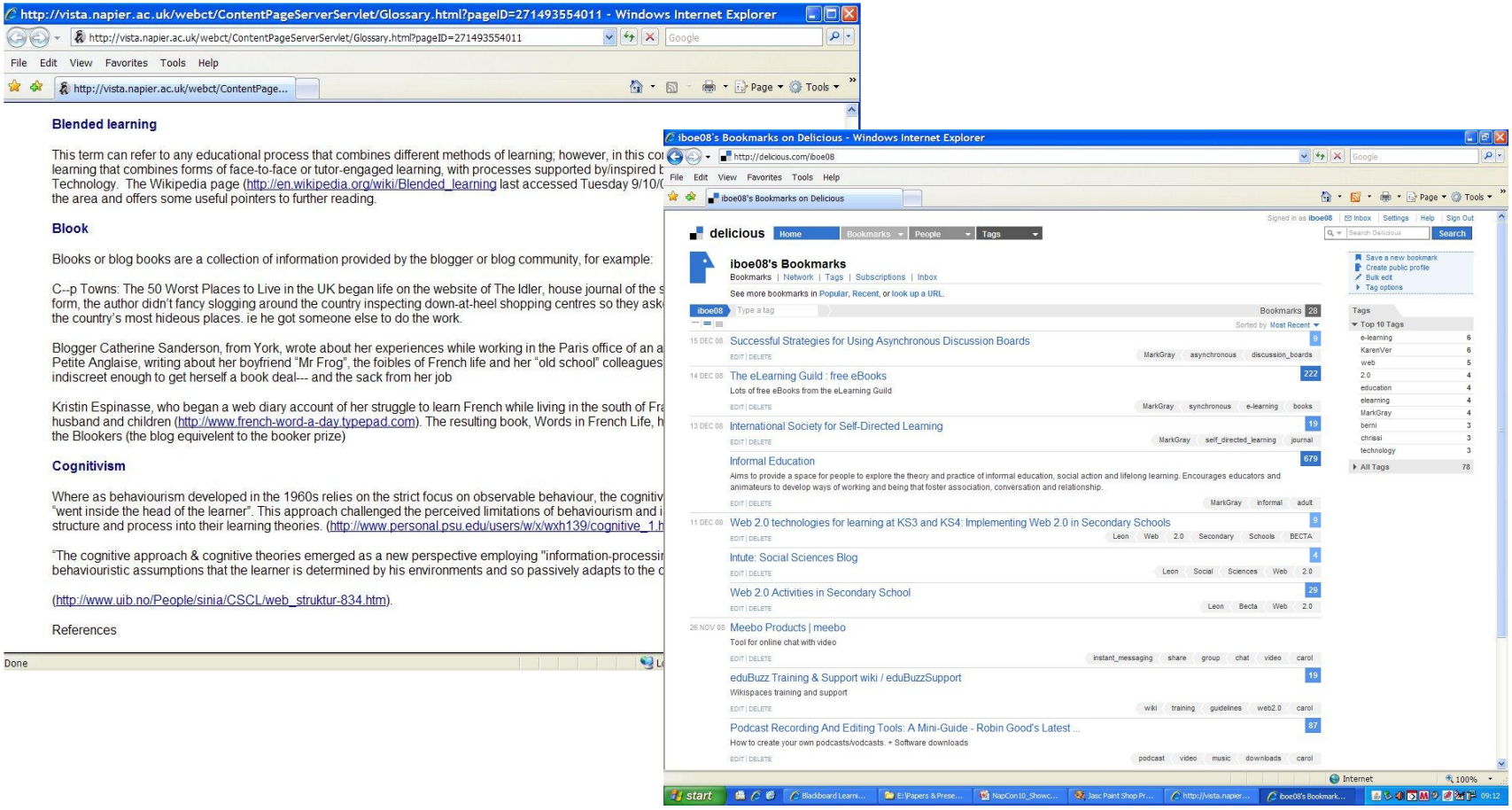
This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 2.5 UK: Scotland License

Quick Links

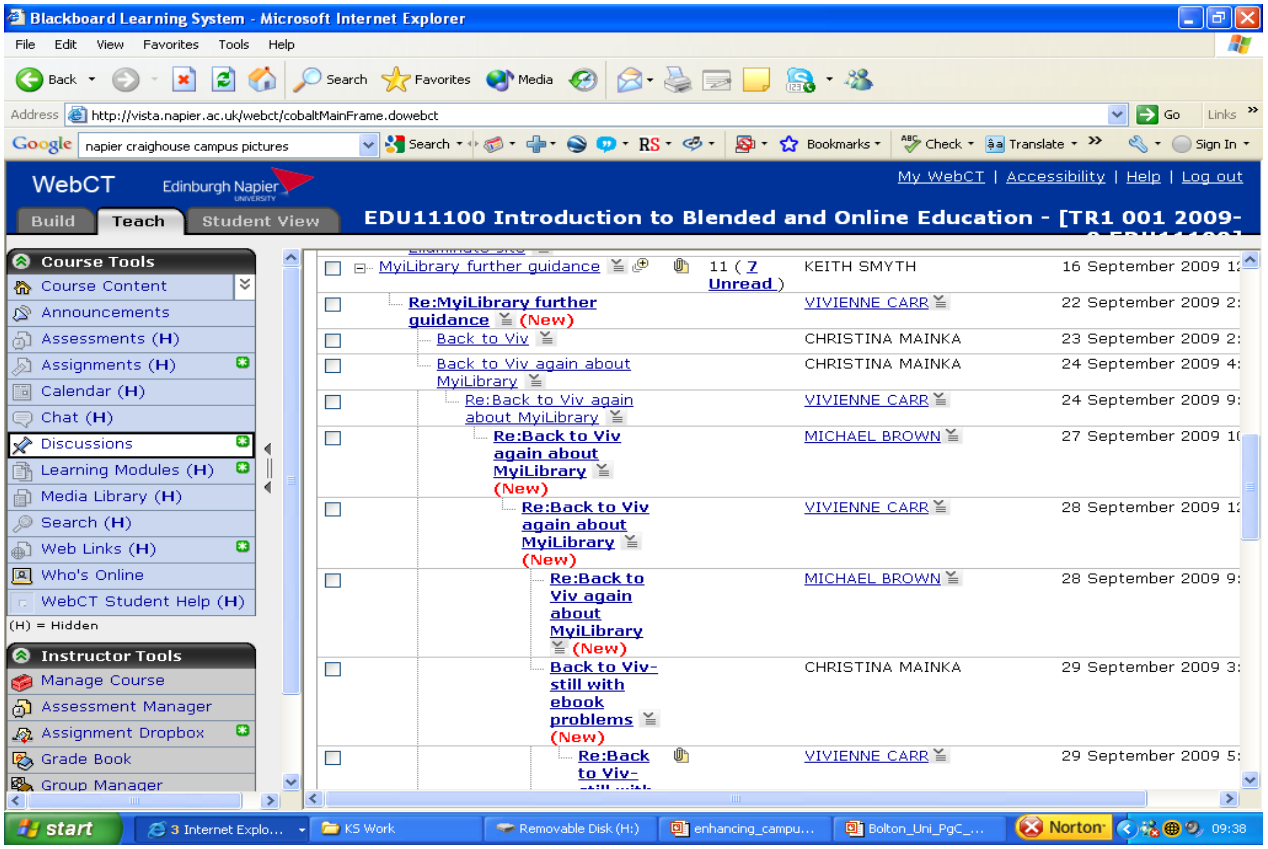
- **0. Benchmark for the use of technology in modules**
- **1. Introduction**
- **2. Overview**
- **3. Background and strategic alignment**
- **4. The 3E Framework explained**
- **5. Practical considerations for implementing technology**
- **6. Further support**
- **7. The 3E Framework with illustrative examples**
- **8. Edinburgh Napier modules mapped to the 3E Framework**
- **PDF of full document**

http://bit.ly/sUHeWk

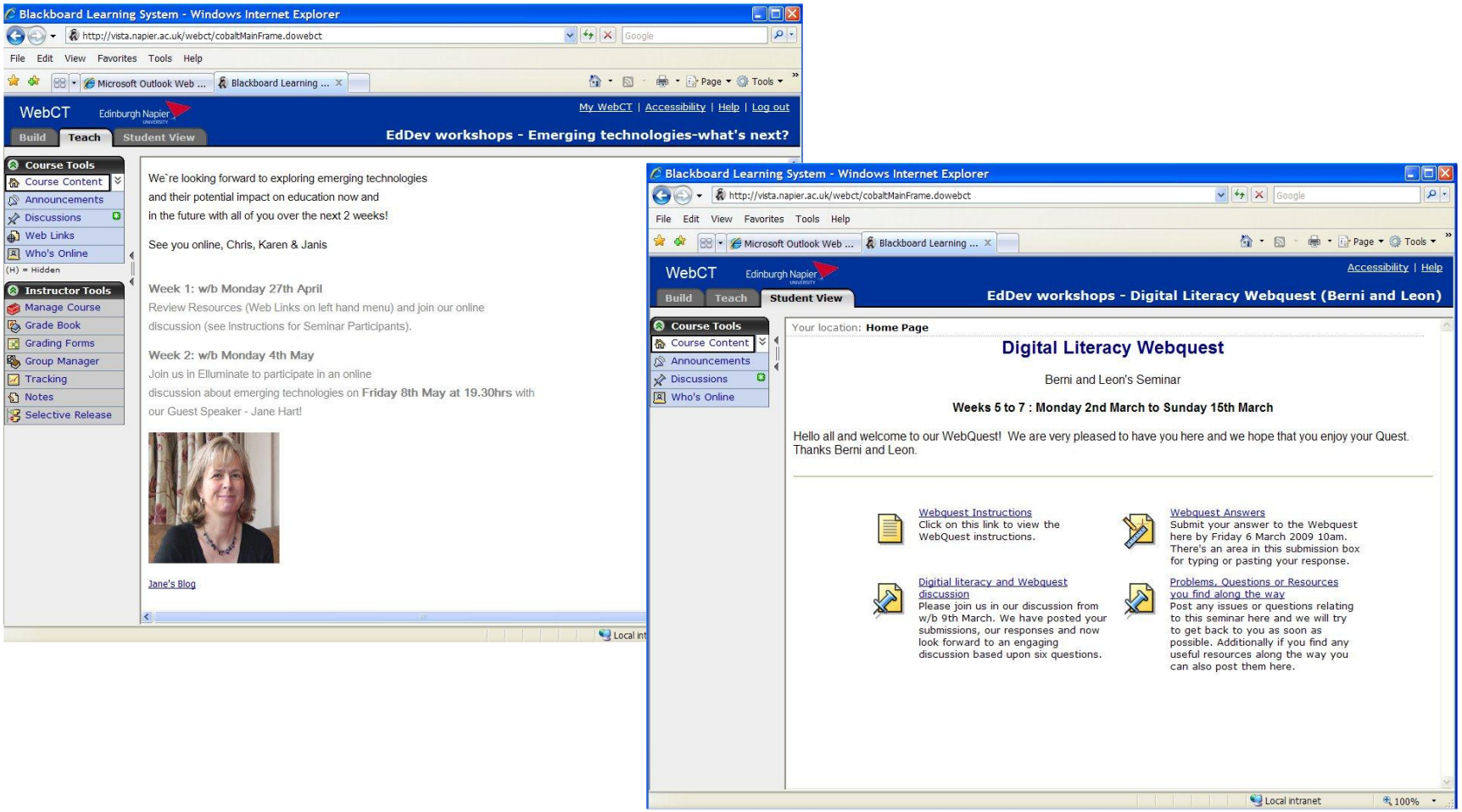
Enhance: learners collectively create content for timely engagement with key concepts



Questions forums for group and peer support

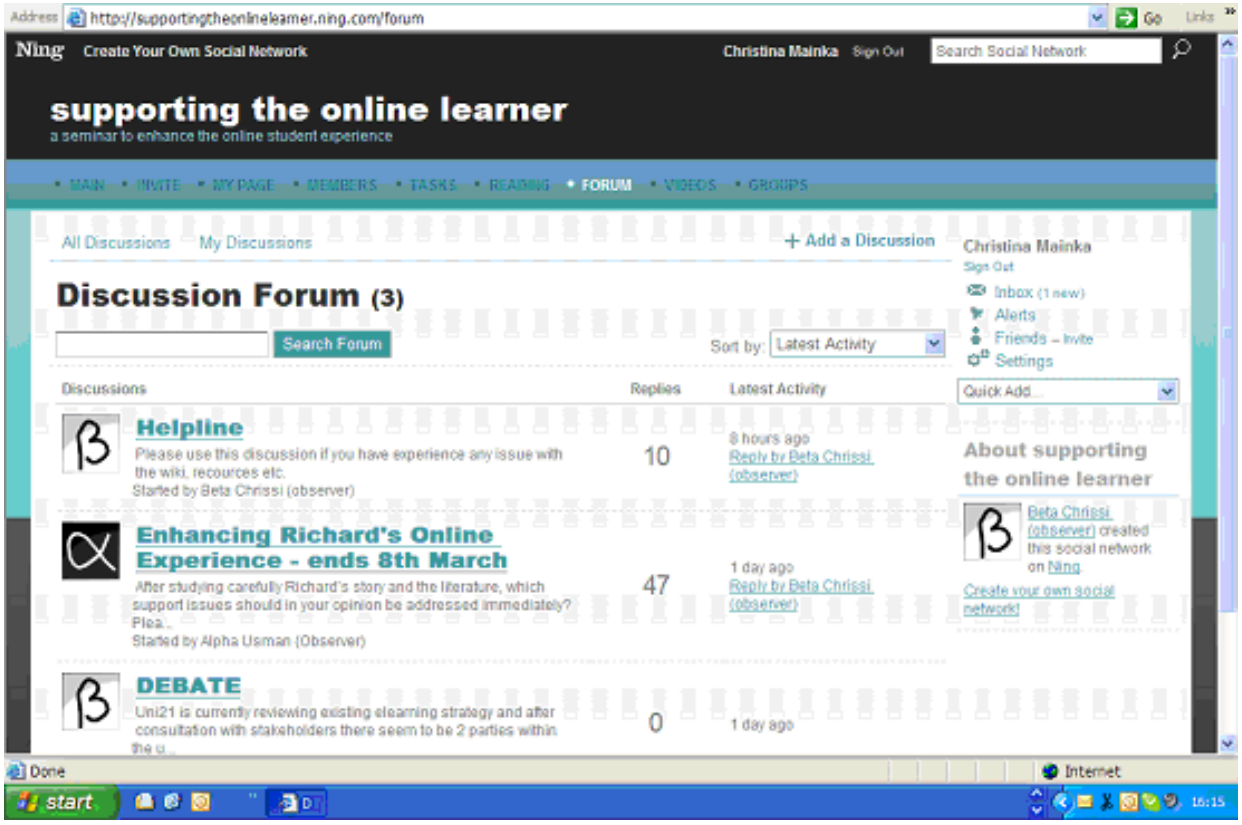


Extend: Student-led online seminars



Edinburgh Napier UNIVERSITY

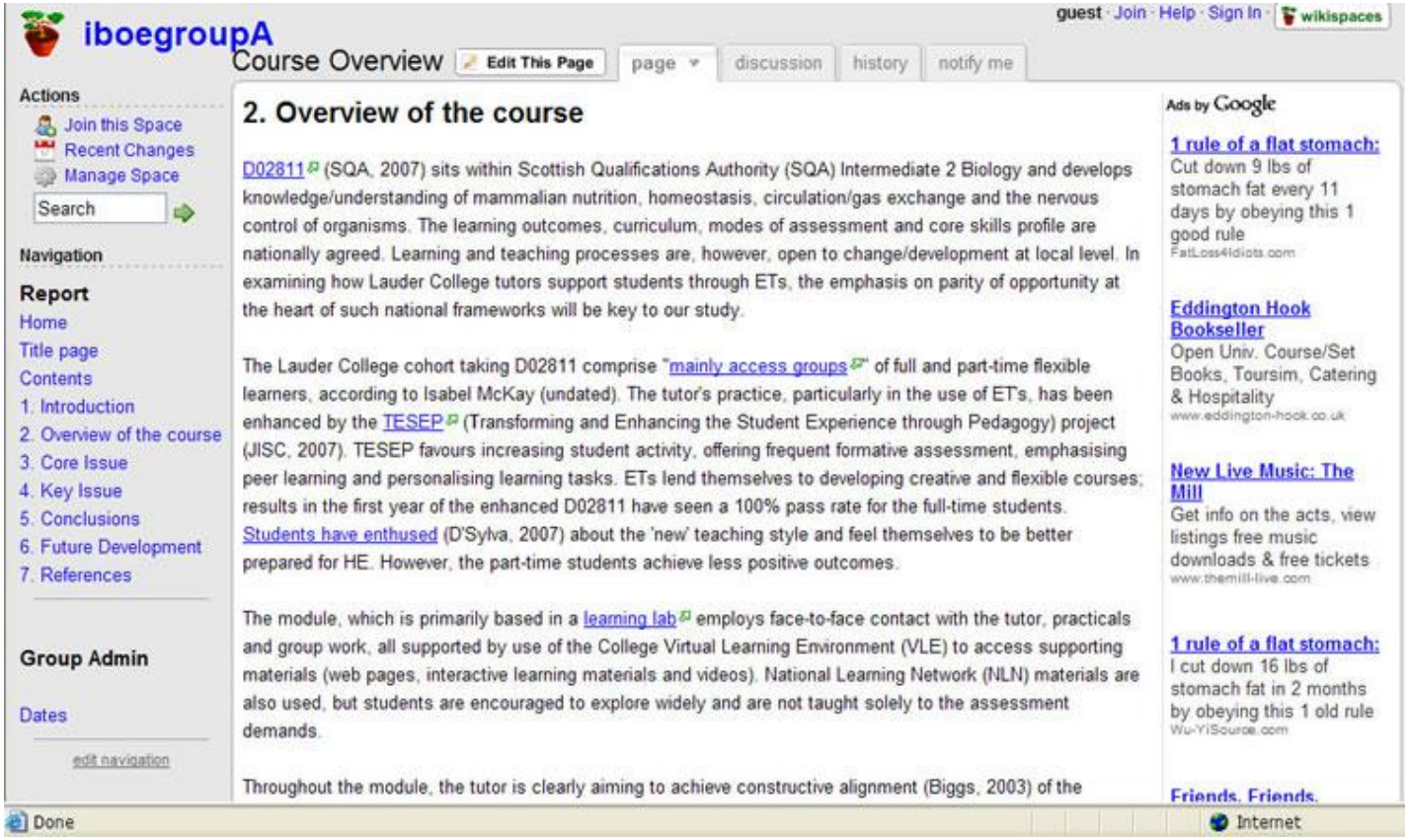
Learners as co-tutors/tutors as co-learners



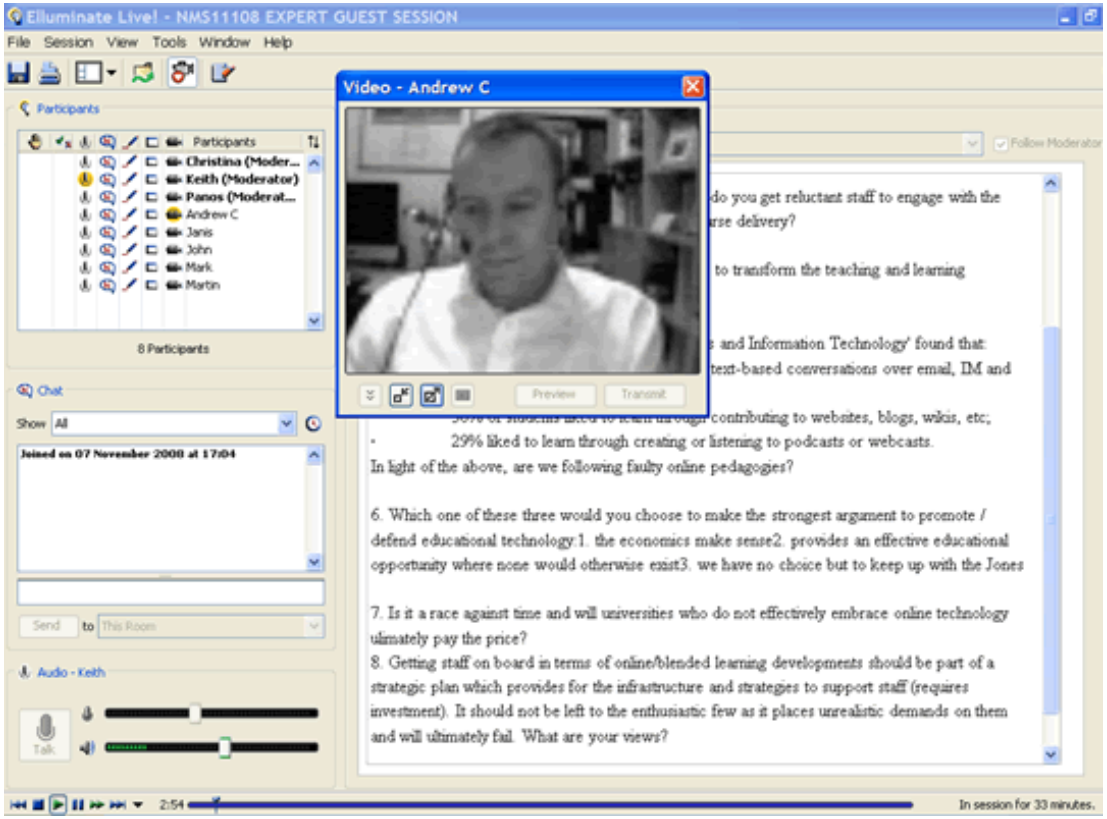
A student-led online seminar implemented in ning

Edinburgh Napier UNIVERSITY

Wikis for authoring group reports

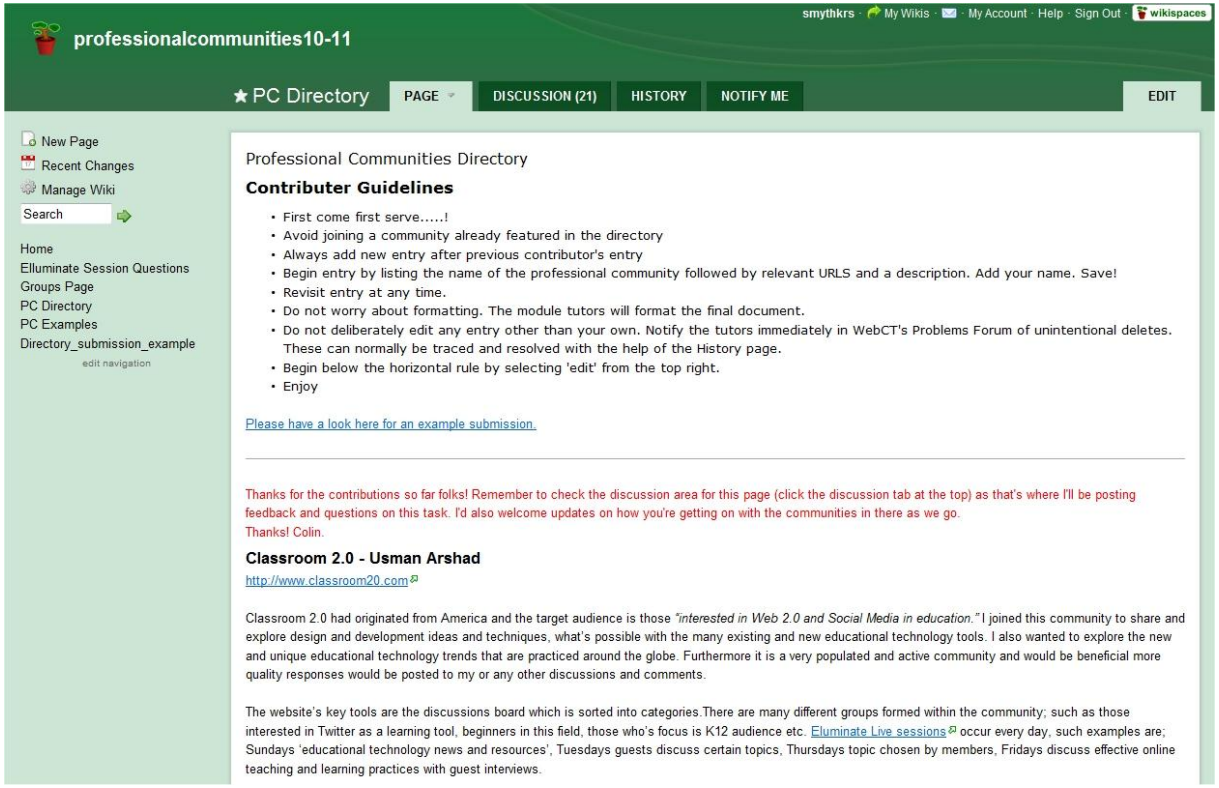


Bringing guest experts into the classroom



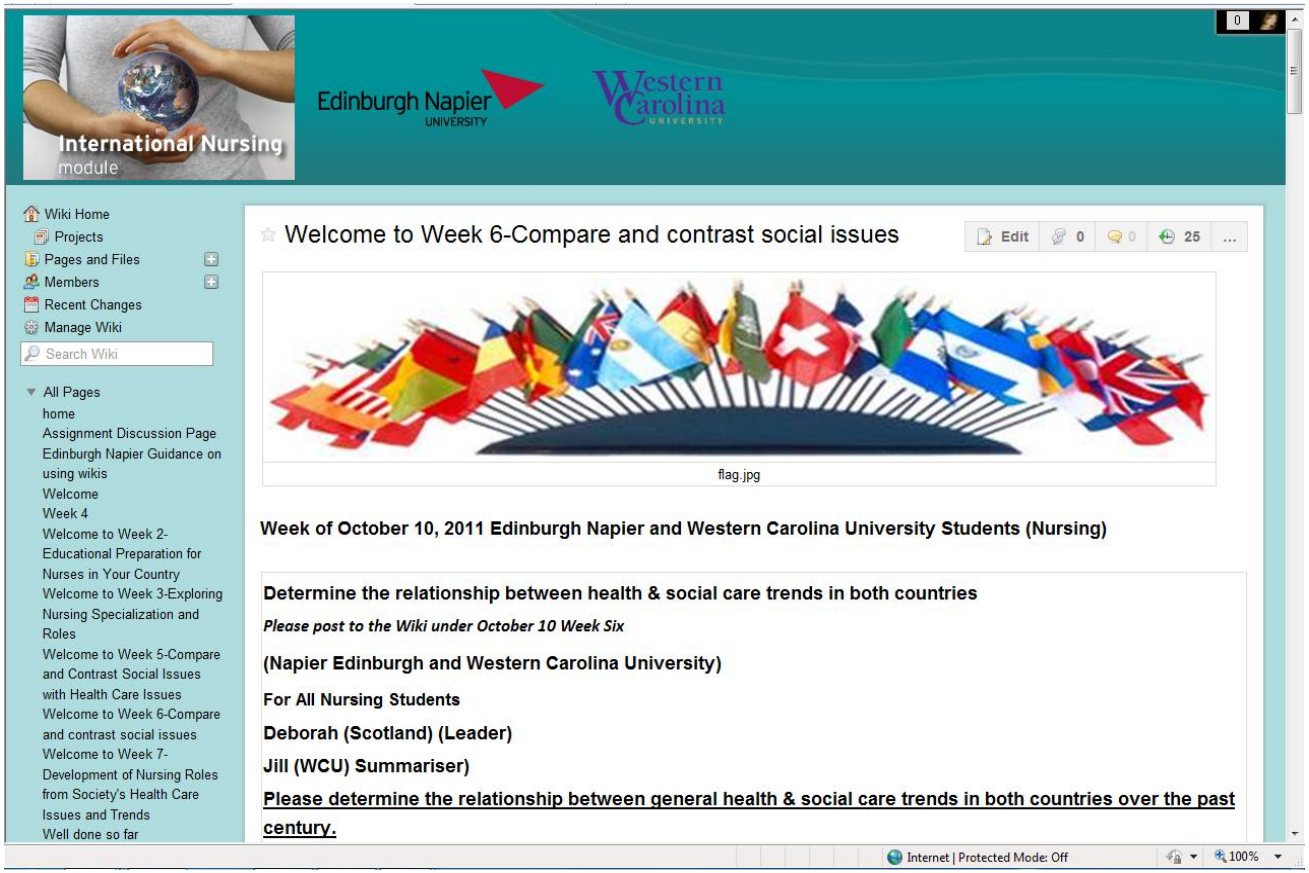
Online guest expert sessions (recorded for revisiting) allow student to interact with and learn from national and international experts

Empower: Joining professional communities



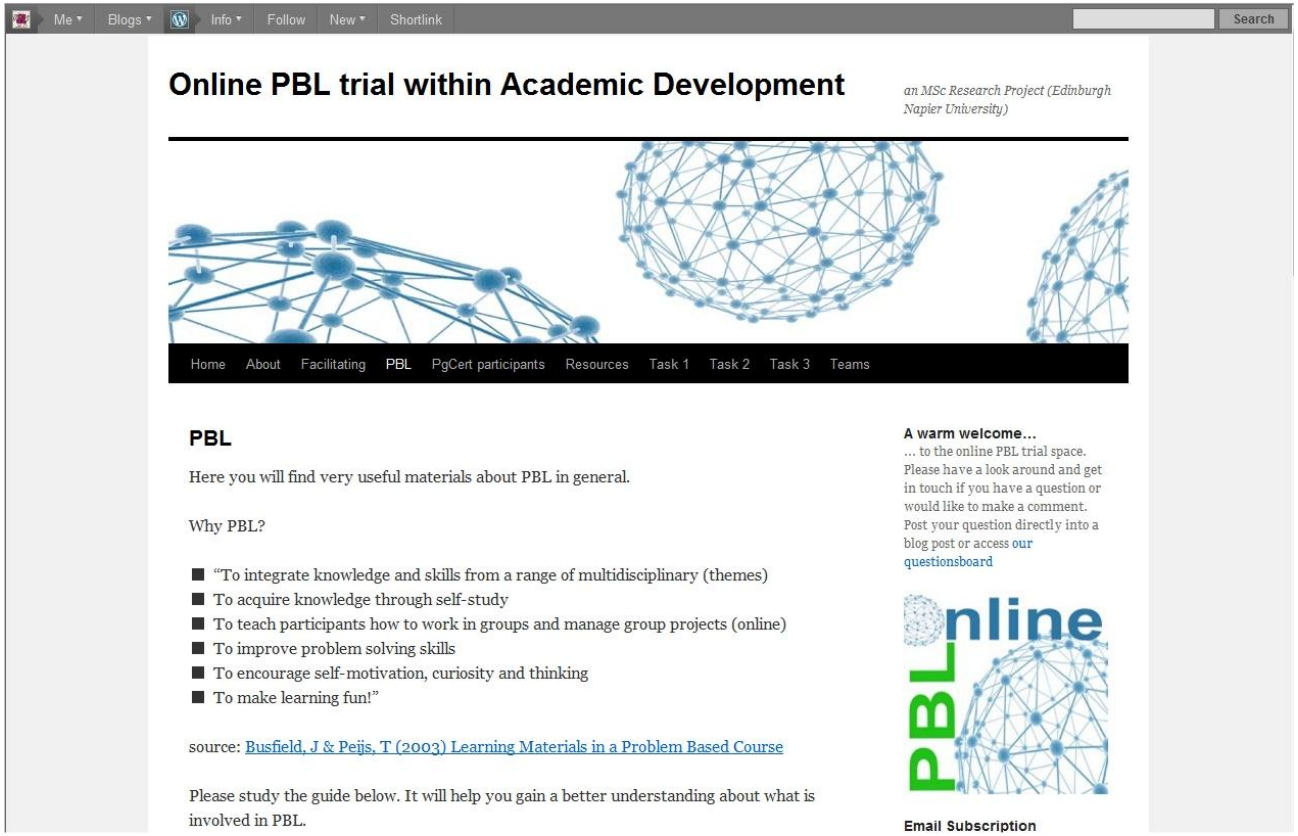
In this example a cohort on the last module of a Pg Cert have collaborated on a ‘directory’ of online professional communities to support their continued development beyond graduation

Learning across course communities



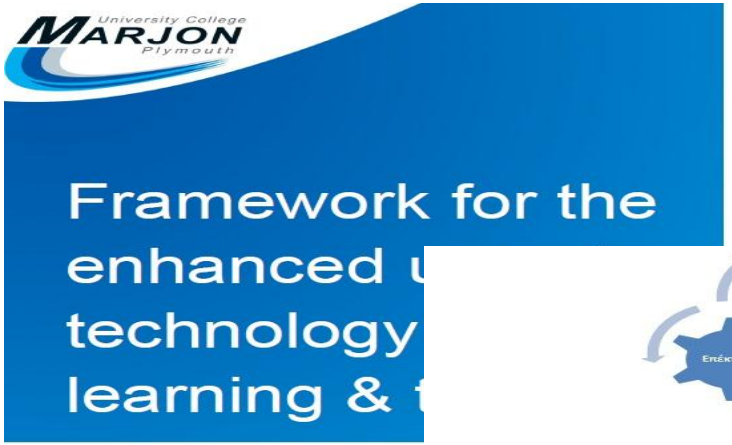
International Nursing module using a wiki to support an internationalised learning experience (courtesy Karen Strickland from Edinburgh Napier)

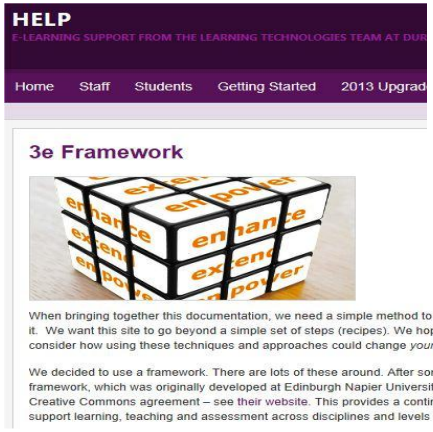
Cross-institutional staff development

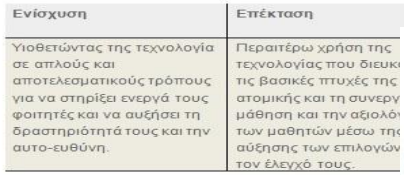


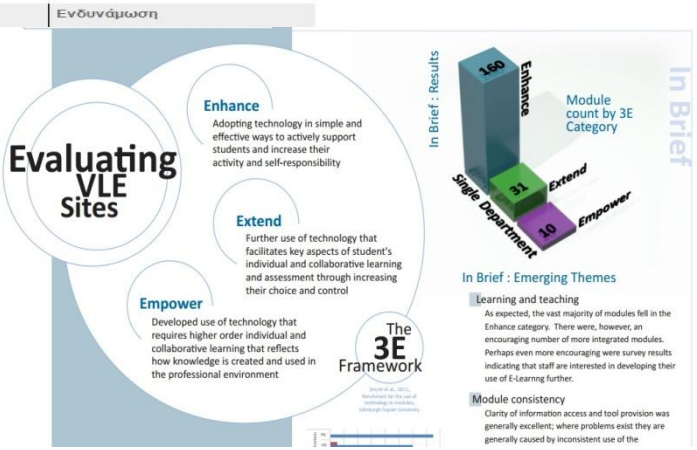
Chrissi Nerantzi at University of Salford has been exploring online problem-based learning across Pg Cert cohorts of new teaching staff

Applications of the 3E Framework









Edinburgh Napier UNIVERSITY

Over to you

Edinburgh Napier UNIVERSITY

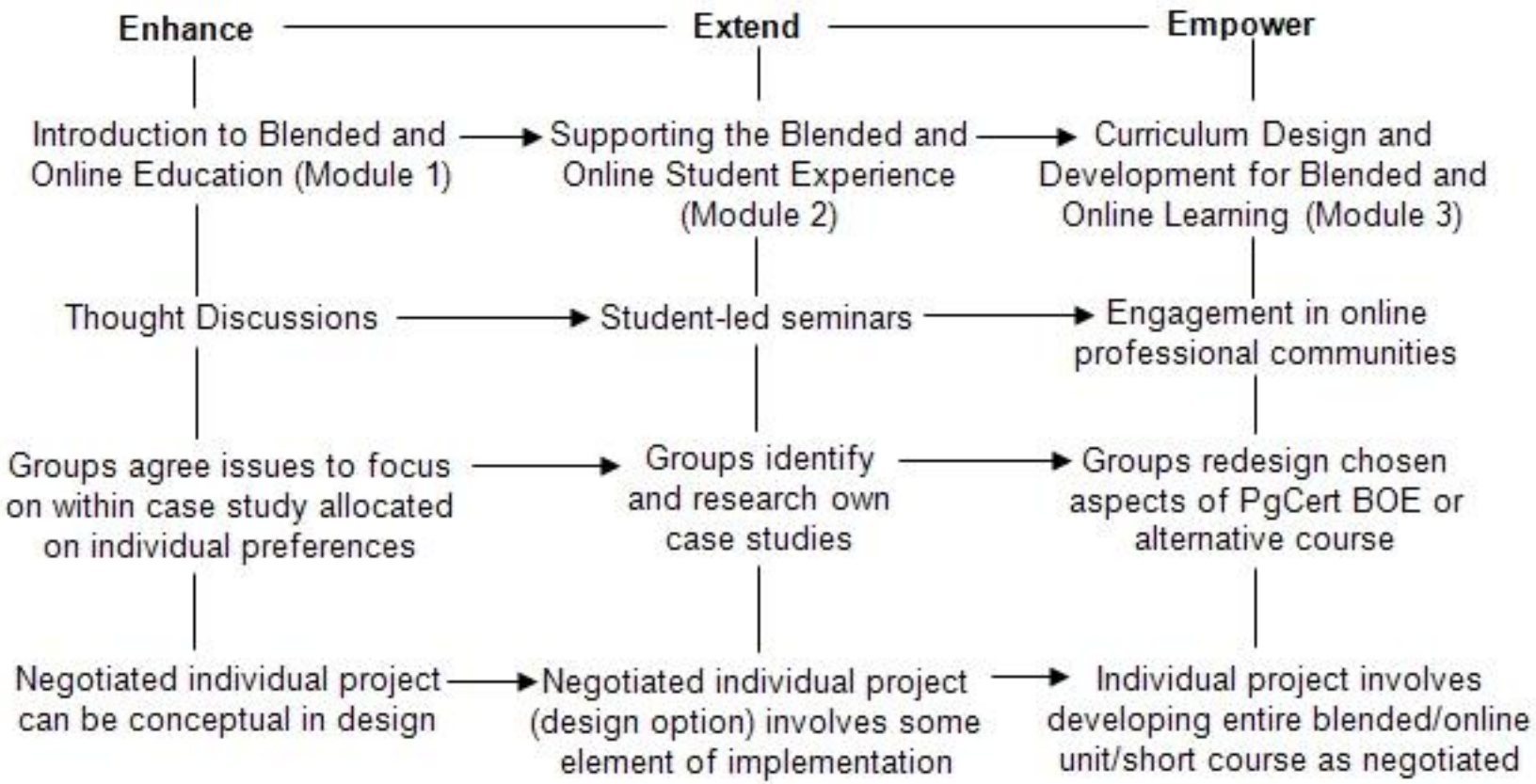
Practical activity (3-4 mins)

- Download the 3E Framework mapping template via http://octel.alt.ac.uk/?attachment_id=3024
- Or from direct link to Word doc http://bit.ly/ZVAjBe
- Follow the instructions on the sheet, and be prepared to report back in 3-4 mins!

3. Structuring activities across a course

Edinburgh Napier UNIVERSITY

The 3E Framework on the MSc BOE



Edinburgh Napier UNIVERSITY

Chat room activity

- How do you currently structure activities so they support learning across a course context?
- What do you think about in terms of the relationship between activities at different stages of a course?
- What would you recommend as good practice for others to think about?

Edinburgh Napier UNIVERSITY

4. Some practical considerations

- Learners don’t have well developed, culturally-informed expectations about TEL so we need to make guidance and assessment criteria for online activities explicit.
- Early social and ‘no risk’ opportunities for exploring and joining online environments and cohorts are critical to engagement and retention (e.g. many online courses have no formal learning in Week 1, or have a Week 0)
- Blended and online courses that are not heavily content-based and driven, and instead engage learners in relevant activities, can be easier for tutors to keep current

- Provide a clear indication what support learners can expect, and when, as well as what is expected of them
- Provide multiple opportunities for learners to engage, and align activities with periodic deadlines for coursework
- Consider a Weekly Virtual Office Hours session to support online activities, especially in fully online contexts, to complement general ‘questions’ or ‘problems’ forums.

Edinburgh Napier UNIVERSITY

Thank you

Keith Smyth k.smyth@napier.ac.uk

Skype and Twitter @smythkrs

Blog http://3eeducation.org/