**Supporting Productive Engagement in Online Communities**

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**Rationale**

Supporting productive engagement in online communities is one of the Brookes graduate attributes. From our own experience and through discussion with colleagues we realised that knowledge and understanding in this area varied greatly. Through our research and presentation we wanted to explore what was meant by ‘Explore Effectively in Online Communities’ and how we might begin to support our students in this.

**Intended Learning Outcomes**

Participants will understand the importance of supporting productive engagement in online communities.

Participants will be aware of a variety of ways of supporting student engagement in online communities.

Participants will have identified which areas of their own subject knowledge need to be developed in order to support student’s engagement in online communities.

**Session Plan**

*First Part*

Introduction to online communities and to Oxford Brookes directives towards enhancing student productive engagement in online communities.

Evaluation of our own level of involvement in online communities: survey of which online communities are most popular amongst tutors and students

*Second Part*

 How do we develop our own subject knowledge, as tutors, in the area of online communities?

 Discuss barriers to engagement and how to overcome them

 Self- evaluation and personal development options

*Third Part*

 How can we support students to engage productively in relevant online communities?

Practical activity: how would we use a given online community to enhance student learning in our courses?

**Pre- Session**

Colleagues were asked to complete a survey detailing their knowledge and current use of online communities.

**References**

* Brill J and Park Y (2008) Facilitating Engaged Learning in the Interaction Age: Taking a Pedagogically- Disciplined Approach to Innovation with Emergent Technologies. *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*. 20 (1), 70- 78.
* Kassens- Noor E (2012) Twitter as a Teaching Practice to Enhance Active and Informal Learning in Higher Education: The Case of Sustainable Tweets. *Active Learning in Higher Education*. 13 (1) 9- 21.
* Oxford Brookes (2011) A Taxonomy of Digital and Information Literacies [https://wiki.brookes.ac.uk/display/GAA/Digital+and+Information+Literacy](https://wiki.brookes.ac.uk/display/GAA/Digital%2Band%2BInformation%2BLiteracy) [accessed March 2014]

 Details the Brookes graduate attributes in the field of digital and information literacies.

* Race P and Pickford R (2007) *Making Teaching Work: ‘Teaching Smarter’ in Post Compulsory Education*. London: Sage

In their chapter on ‘Developing Online Learning’ the authors stress the importance of being aware of how students are already interacting with online communities and drawing on this in our teaching.

* Salmon G (2004) *e- tivities: The Key to Active Online Learning*. London: Routledge.

Although slightly dated now in terms of the platforms discussed, Salmon still has many useful things to say about supporting student engagement in online communities.