



	University Department Module	Strathclyde
		Business School
		Management Development Programme Year 1
	Overview	MDP is a mature and innovative programme, which prizes student business skills and personal development for employability. This programme of three year's duration is compulsory for all business students (500 students each year) and has been running since 1999. Active and problem based learning is the approach and students work in interdisciplinary teams. The programme team work collaboratively with a range of sponsoring employers including Proctor and Gamble, Ernst Young, Accenture and Deloitte. Deloitte sponsor prizes for the first year holiday project second semester task.
	Drivers for change	<p>The project aim is to investigate the enhancement of student reflection and self-regulation using a class weblog, with particular reference to insights from a major assessed team assignment in semester two (<i>The Holiday Project</i>) in relation to an assessed individual reflection activity. Student reflection is seen as a key learning outcome to enhance employability. Related theoretical rationales include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current thinking in UK business education (Hawkrige , 2005) • Employability & assessment of learning (Knight & Yorke, 2003) • Enhancement of student learning in HE (Boud and others , 1995/6) • Student career preparation (Mayrhofer et al, 2005) <p>The main driver for examining the use of the weblog is a desire to explore how this tool can be implemented to support students in all team activities across all three years of the programme and how it can be related to established student reflective practices including the current first year Learning Diary. The outcomes of this project are intended to provide valuable information for future development of the course design, and review of staff teaching and assessment practice, based on a deeper appreciation of student engagement with the Weblog as a tool for team working, managing projects and encouraging reflection.</p>
	Intervention	In this programme, students work in groups of approximately 40/50 organised in continuing teams of approximately 5/6 students and supported by a lecturer/tutor staff combination for each group. A pattern of activity including weekly 2 hour group sessions, 1 hour lab, group projects and presentations constitutes the main features of the learning design alongside individual numeracy work delivered and assessed through a VLE. This contrasts with more familiar lecture/tutorial/assignment/exam design commonly used in first year classes. During the second semester, the major assessed task for each student team is to undertake the 'Holiday Project' for which a written report and oral presentation with power point slide show is required. During the course of the project a number of weekly 'milestone' presentations are required. A Learning Diary is submitted for feedback and marking during the second semester. Students are also asked to submit an element of individual reflection on team working on completion of the project. During the REAP intervention approximately 60 students in 8 teams used a weblog supported by the VLE as a combined project management and reflection tool.
PROCESS	EMPOWERMENT NICOL'S 7 PRINCIPLES OF GOOD ASSESSMENT DESIGN	Principle 1 (clarify criteria) Principle 2 (self-assess, reflect) Principle 3 (tutor feedback)
		(1) Students introduced to blogging tool during semester one. Originally asked to self-explore use of the tool without prescription for use from tutors and subsequently suggested for use during second semester project. (2) Second semester project builds on first semester team-building project. (3) Students are given freedom to design their own project and research activities.
		(1) Students asked to submit a reflection at the end of the project on role of team, experience of group working and the role of the weblog. (2) Blogging tool supports development of personal archive of individual and group contributions. (3) Weekly milestones require continuous self-reflection and self-regulation as part of group accountability mechanisms.
		1) Students receive weekly face-to-face tutor feedback on milestone tasks (e.g. research design feasibility, questionnaire design, financial implications of business design etc.)



ENGAGEMENT	GIBBS & SIMPSON'S 4 CONDITIONS OF TIME & EFFORT ON TASK	Principle 4 (peer feedback)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Use of technology supports students to communicate effectively with group members during large-scale, semester-long project. 2) Automatic alert mechanism supports efficient communication, transparency and accountability for collaborative processes and team responsibility. 3) Weekly milestone presentations offer opportunities for face-to-face feedback for peer feedback. 4) Students taking the course are also taking a wide variety of other business school disciplines (e.g. accountancy, hospitality management) and able to bring a broader understanding of business management to peers in other subject divisions.
		Principle 5 (motivation)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Students have reported that team-working activities have a positive impact on confidence and motivation. 2) Evidence of students using blogging tool throughout Easter vacation period.
		Principle 6 (close feedback loop)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Weekly milestone tasks offer opportunities for peer and tutor feedback and opportunities for refinement and revision of tasks elements (e.g. research design, financial projections).
		Principle 7 (shape teaching)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Tutors act as facilitators during weekly face-to-face sessions. 2) Tutors receive information from weekly presentations on group development and effectiveness. 3) Tutors not provided with access to blogging tool for information to shape face-to-face opportunities.
		Condition 1 (in and out of class)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Increased opportunity for flexible learning through provisions of access to communications tool (blog) on and off campus 2) Students using blogging tool throughout Easter vacation period.
		Condition 2 (spread evenly)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Weekly milestone presentations encouraged student engagement across semester-long project.
		Condition 3 (deep not surface)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Students have reported that the tool supports a more 'sophisticated' approach to project management and team working and enhanced rigour in exploration of key areas.
		Condition 4 (high expectations)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Scope and length of the task is considered exceptionally challenging for first year students. 2) Top three teams asked to present their projects to senior partners in the boardroom at Deloitte. 3) All participants in the top three teams receive a letter from Deloitte confirming the importance of the skills developed during the project.
		Efficiencies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) As this tool was already available to the department there have been no additional software costs. 2) Students have received enhanced feedback and reflection opportunities with little or no additional staff time required. 3) Many assessment and feedback activities already supported by online tools in the programme.
		Informal Learning Gains	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Students expressed satisfaction at gains made in effective team working, project management, communication and reflective learning. 2) Students commented on the applicability of the blogging tool to all business school subject areas. 3) Students recognise the authenticity and applicability of the task to future employability.
OUTCOME		Formal Learning Gains	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Analysis of correlation between marks, attendance and use of weblogs is in progress.