

Students' use of Web 2.0 tools in higher education: good practice in assessment and academic integrity – what does it take?

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Academic teaching staff are being encouraged to find innovative and authentic ways for their students to use social media, or Web 2.0, tools. Many pedagogical rationales have been advanced to support this change in learning activities. Web 2.0 tools provide many opportunities for incorporation into higher education activities. It is important that the assessment of such activities be appropriately designed and conducted to enable the assessment opportunities that Web 2.0 provides to be realised. The challenge is to create a framework that assists in the design and provision of quality assessment tasks and moderation irrespective of the technology employed. Another challenge is to design, create and deliver learning activities and assessments that are aligned with the course capabilities and therefore exhibit constructive alignment (Biggs, 2003). This workshop offers participants an opportunity to review key findings and resources from 'Web 2.0 Authoring Tools in Higher Education Learning and Teaching', an Australian Learning and Teaching Council-funded project running from 2009 to 2011. Participants will have the opportunity to:

- learn about key findings from the project
- discuss examples of academic practice involving the use of social media for medium- and high-stakes assessment of student learning using pilot vignettes
- discuss the project framework and guidelines
- consider scenarios for Web 2.0 assessment against the provided principles of good practice in the assessment of student social media activities in higher education.

Workshop materials include:

- findings from a national survey of academics who have assessed their students' Web 2.0 activities
- a framework of good practice arising from a national roundtable on this topic
- documentation and reflections on such practice in 17 different university subject learning and teaching settings across a range of disciplines.

Apart from the challenges of using emerging technologies within existing infrastructure, the effects on staff workload and policy also require investigation. The workshop is intended for teaching academics who use, or plan to use, social media activities for medium- and high-stakes assessment. It will also be of interest to educational developers and managers who are concerned about issues relating to the assessment of students' social media activities. It may also interest administrative staff involved in assessment policy and implementation.

Keywords: Web 2.0 academic integrity; Web 2.0 assessment

Theme: innovative assessments: opportunities and challenges

Objective

This workshop will provide up-to-the-minute information about the opportunities and challenges facing Australian academics who assess Web 2.0 authoring tools in their courses and programs. What motivates these academics and how they evaluate their initiatives, which pose challenges to academic integrity and assessment practices as we know them, will form the basis of our workshop discussions. We will provide examples from innovators with whom we have worked to identify good practice over the course of a teaching semester.

Workshop format

The workshop will involve a combination of presentations about the project findings, whole-group discussions about the issues, and small group activities, as follows.

Introductory activity

Participants will share their thoughts about the issues that are important to consider when using social web technologies for assessment tasks in higher education.

Presentation of survey and interview findings

The presenters will provide an overview of findings from an online survey of Australian academics who have been involved in assessing students' social web activities in subjects they have taught. Presenters will also share key findings from semi-structured interviews with selected survey respondents, outlining interviewees' perspectives on their use of social web technologies in teaching and learning. Participants will be encouraged to participate in the discussion and contribute their experiences.

Small-group discussion of key issues

Participants will break into small groups to discuss and identify key issues that need to be taken into account when designing and implementing social web assessment activities. Each group will focus on addressing one of the following sets of questions.

- *Affordances*: Why use social web technologies for assessment activities in higher education? What are the unique affordances that social web technologies offer? How and why can assessment tasks make use of these affordances?
- *Processes*: What constitutes good practice across the assessment cycle? What factors need to be considered when designing, conducting, marking, providing feedback, and reviewing the assignment?
- *Policy*: What university policy issues are important? What, if any, challenges might be raised by university policy issues in the context of using social web technologies in assessment? Do university policies need to be updated because of the new forms of assessment activities that social web technologies enable?

Outline of draft good-practice framework and field-testing process

The presenters will provide an overview of the draft good-practice framework that the project team developed in consultation with various collaborators. They will briefly describe the process of field-testing this framework in 17 different university subject learning and teaching settings.

Small-group activity

Participants will break into small groups to learn about and discuss detailed case studies and scenarios drawn from the field-testing phase of the project. Each group will examine a different case study and discuss the following questions.

- What can we learn from this case about key considerations when using social web activities in medium- to high-stakes assessment?
- What constitutes good practice in these settings? Are there particular examples that demonstrate good practice?

This activity will conclude with a whole-group discussion, sharing details about the case study and about the issues raised.

Project resources

The workshop will conclude with a presentation and review of the resources that have been developed in this project.

Previous presentations and resources

An earlier version of this workshop was presented at the Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia (HERDSA) 2010 Conference.

In addition, the following two recent seminars have reported on the project:

- Gray, K. & Waycott, J. (2010). The assessment of students' Web 2.0 activities: Findings from an ALTC project. Presentation for the Transforming Assessment Webinar Series, 26 May 2010, http://www.transformingassessment.com/events_26_may_2010.php.
- Gray, K. & Waycott, J. (2010). Students' use of Web 2.0 tools in higher education: Good practice in assessment and academic integrity. Presentation for the Australian Learning and Teaching Council Health Sciences seminar, Medical Education Unit, University of Melbourne, 30 June 2010.

Members of the project team have also published the following two recent papers on related work:

- Gray, K., Thompson, C., Sheard, J., Clerehan, R. & Hamilton, M. (2010). Students as Web 2.0 authors: Implications for assessment design and conduct. *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology*, 26(1): 105-122. Available at: <http://www.ascilite.org.au/ajet/ajet26/gray.pdf>.
- Gray, K., Thompson, C., Clerehan, R., Sheard, J., & Hamilton, M. (2008). Web 2.0 authorship: issues of referencing and citation for academic integrity. *Internet and Higher Education*, 11: 112-118.

More information about the project can be found on the following websites.

- Project website and resources: <http://www.groups.edna.edu.au/course/view.php?id=2146>.
- Proceedings of national roundtable about Web 2.0 and assessment: <http://web2assessmentroundtable.pbworks.com>.
- Project blog: <http://web2assessment.blogspot.com>.
- Relevant resources and literature: <http://www.citeulike.org/tag/assessment20>.

Acknowledgement

Support for this project was provided by the Australian Learning and Teaching Council, an initiative of the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. The views expressed in this document do not necessarily reflect the views of the Australian Learning and Teaching Council.