



Web 2.0 for Institutional Managers

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PROMOTING WEB 2.0 IN VET AND ADULT TRAINING



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**Co-financed by:**

The project SVEA has been funded with support from the European Commission. This document reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.



Introduction

This module explores how Web 2.0 services are increasingly being used in the management of educational institutions. It is designed to inform educational managers about the ways that wikis, blogs, resource sharing services, online communications and a range of social networking applications are being used for management purposes. The module demonstrates how the use of Web 2.0 tools encourages collaborative working and effective engagement with staff across the institution.

Session 1 - Introduction to Web 2.0 in Institutional Management

This session summarises how educational institutions are using web 2.0 tools to improve organisational management and better support both their staff and students. It provides examples of how institutions are using Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and iTunes to communicate and share information and resources.

Session 2 - Management Communications with Web 2.0

This session explores a number of web 2.0 communications tools and services that are being used by educational institutions, both in the support of learners and in the management of the institution itself. It shows how companies like Google and Microsoft make applications and computing resources available for use by education at no cost and gives examples of how institutions are using such resources in their management communications.

Session 3 - Student Administration and Support with Web 2.0

This session describes how essential day-to-day information is made available to students using web 2.0 tools. It gives examples of how course and personal support is provided, including residential support, library support opportunities, local area information including transport and weather, and it shows how this is typically integrated with the students' own social environments and mobile devices.

Session 4 - Marketing the Institution with Web 2.0

Web 2.0 tools have been used very effectively by educational managers to market their institutions and promote the services they offer. YouTube videos have been used very effectively and many institutions showcase their educational quality through iTunesU. Social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter are used, particularly in the niche specialisms of the institution, to promote their distinct offer.

Session 5 - Making Resources Available with Web 2.0

In addition to the main institutional online learning environment that provides educational support resources for students, web 2.0 applications are being increasingly used to supplement this provision. This final session provides an insight into the development of open educational resources and invites managers to reflect on the significance of such developments for the future of their institution.

Session 1 - Introduction to Web 2.0 in Institutional Management

Introduction

This session provides an introduction to the use of web 2.0 tools, social networking software and cloud computing in the management of institutions. It shows how the use is largely in addition to the mission-critical institutional IT systems and adds value and flexibility in the way management information is communicated both to staff and students. However, it also suggests that this may change in the future as Internet use matures and the financial benefits of open source software and cloud computing are exploited.

The purpose of the session is to introduce the areas of management that can benefit from the use of Web 2.0 tools and provide examples of how institutions are already using them. It will lead directly on to the following sessions that will cover web 2.0 use in management communications, student support, institutional marketing and resource provision.

Throughout the module you will engage in inquiry-based reflective exercises and will be invited to share and discuss your experience and opinions.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this session you will:

- Appreciate the way web 2.0 tools and social networking software is being increasingly used in institutional management;
- Have formed an initial view of the value, benefits and possible disadvantages of using web 2.0 tools in educational management;
- Have shared your views with others in the module discussion forum.

What you have to do

This introductory session sets the scene for the *Web 2.0 for Institutional Managers* module. Your task is to read through the resources, complete a brief online investigatory exercise, form your own initial opinion of the value, benefits and disadvantages of web 2.0 in institutional management, and to contribute to the discussion forum.

1.1 Web 2.0 in Management

The other svea modules in this series have shown that Web 2.0 tools can be used to add new functionality to the online delivery of courses and support of VET students. This module demonstrates how the same range of tools are equally valuable in institutional management and assist in good management practice.

An educational institution employs staff and manages its resources in the same way as any other enterprise and hence has many of the same management processes and procedures. This means that examples of effective use of Web 2.0 tools in business generally can be of great value when planning their use in education and this session will draw on appropriate examples.



The article below refers specifically to the use of Web 2.0 in project management, and this is a useful starting point as it provides a broad summary of the benefits the tools bring to management practice.

Here you can find the article “[Project Management With Web 2.0](#)”. The key thing to note in this article is the way it describes the functionality of a Wiki and how this can be used in teamwork. You will see that it is a multi-functional website in its own right that allows the sharing of management documents, the maintenance of shared calendars, the provision of team communications and a number of other features of value in the management process. The other sessions in this module will look at each of these applications in more detail.

There are many other resources on the Web that provide information about the range of tools available and practical examples of their effective use in management. Here you can find a [video](#) that talks about both good and bad practice, but reinforces the message in the article above that Wikis are very powerful collaborative online management resources.

There are also other online learning resources that cover the use of Web 2.0 in management that you may wish to explore. A good example is the [openED course](#): Business and Management Competencies in a Web 2.0 world.

The overall message is that business generally is making ever increasing use of web 2.0 functionality in its management processes. Apart from introducing new and beneficial ways of supporting management processes, the fact that most of the tools are freely available means that their use is very cost-effective.

Having introduced the use of Web 2.0 tools in business management, we will now look at some examples in the management of education.

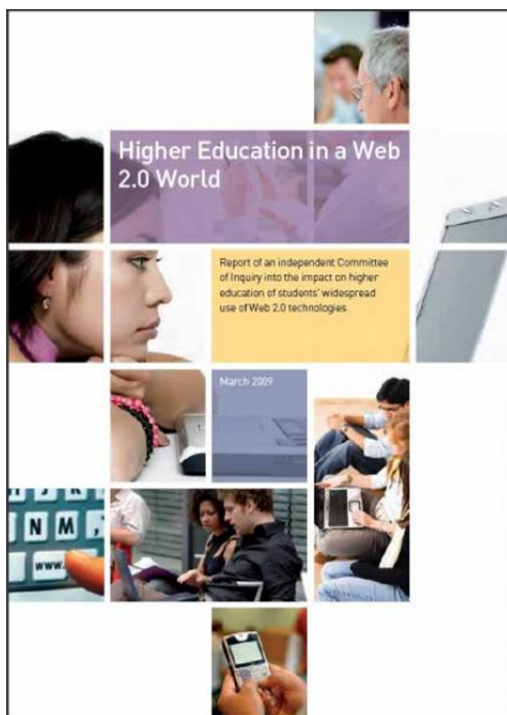
1.2 Educational Management and the Internet

Web 2.0 tools and social networking applications are increasingly being used in educational management. For the most part they are being used to supplement institutional IT systems and bring added value and functionality rather than replace them. The reason for this, of course, is because institutions need to ensure full control and data security with business-critical IT systems for management information, financial management, payroll, student records, etc.

Having said that, institutions are increasingly using open source, web 2.0 and cloud computing resources for institution-wide systems such as email (Gmail is a popular web 2.0/cloud computing option), the online learning environment platform (Moodle is a widely used open source LMS/VLE application), and cloud-based collaborative document sharing is becoming common in educational management (Google docs is a good example).

The main use of web 2.0 in educational management is in areas where communications is a key activity. This applies to institutional administration at all levels; student support services, including the library; course advertising and marketing; and general course delivery and management.

A recent report published by JISC in the UK summarised current web 2.0 usage in Higher Education and made the following observations regarding institutional management (<http://www.jisc.ac.uk/media/documents/publications/heweb20rptv1.pdf>):



Administration

We found that staff are using social software for a range of purposes such as passing on course information, changes to a lecture schedule, for example; issuing pertinent reminders on sources relevant to an ongoing project; and providing back up material for upcoming assignments. Wikis are being brought into play for more substantial course information – course notes and handbooks and research guides. In some cases they admit edits or comment by students.

Student support

Several universities, we note, are using social networking software, usually Facebook, as a means of helping students establish contact with each other – make friends – prior to enrolment. This seems to be one area of incursion into Facebook with which students are comfortable and which

some certainly consider to be a good idea, whether they take advantage of it or not. Induction is another area where social networking sites are being used to help students steer a course through the critical early stages of their course and throughout their first year. This benefits students and universities alike, students receiving ongoing support – including from their peers – and the university gaining understanding of areas where it might need to strengthen or add to its services. At the most instrumental level, the net result should be improved retention. We also note the use of social networking software by HEIs at the conclusion of study to facilitate continued contact both with and between alumni.

Advertising and marketing

It is clear that most universities in the UK have a presence on Facebook and many in Second Life as well. These provide opportunities for insights into life at the particular university – for students and their families wherever they are located – that will not come through prospectuses or websites. The intention is to increase degrees of awareness and hence of confidence and comfort on arrival. Students are better prepared for what they are likely to encounter and this, too, should serve to assist retention.

Considerations

The considerations universities face in using Web 2.0 technologies span a range of technical, social, legal and ethical. The questions raised include those of hardware specification and bandwidth requirements; staff training support; choice of provider of the technologies, in-house or external; ensuring access; respecting rights, including to privacy and intellectual property; compliance with data protection, copyright and freedom of information legislation; and acknowledgement of liabilities. JISC services such as JISC Legal, Netskills, Procureweb and TechDis can and do provide general advice and guidance on these questions. Decisions on whether or not to implement Web 2.0 technologies are, however, the responsibility of each institution individually having regard to its particular ethos and circumstances. Here, experience can be shared, but there is no blueprint for action and, indeed, it may not be possible to develop a blueprint in an area that is so highly context specific.



Using Web 2.0 Tools in Educational Management

It would be true to say that the use of web 2.0 tools in institutional management is at an early stage of development. For that reason, most examples of educational use relate to the support of teaching and learning rather than the management of the institution itself. However, it is not difficult to demonstrate the potential and value of web 2.0 tools in management and the following sessions in this module will give examples of how they can be used in management communications, student administration and institutional marketing.

However, before moving on to those sessions, you will be asked to reflect on your current views and experience of using web 2.0 and social networking software in the management of institutions. To help in forming a view, if you have little direct experience of using Web 2.0 in education at present, you are invited to explore how others have used such tools in education using [this website](#).

The website contains a number of links to collaborative web 2.0 tools. It is suggested that you investigate a couple of the sites - Google Docs would be a good start, followed by Classroom 2.0.

Further examples worth viewing are: (close each window to return here)

- [Facebook in Education](#)
- [Education on Twitter](#)
- [YouTube Education](#)
- [iTunesU](#)

When you feel you have formed an initial view about how such tools could be of value in institutional management, complete the reflective exercise in the next section.

1.3 Evaluation Exercise and Discussion

In this first session you have been introduced to the use of web 2.0 tools and social networking software in institutional management. It is likely that you already have experience of the use of such tools in other areas of your life, both socially and at work. You may also have some experience of use in education. You will certainly have already drawn some initial conclusions about the validity, value, benefits and, perhaps, disadvantages of using web 2.0 tools in this context.

You are now invited to share those conclusions in the module discussion forum. To structure your response and enable it to be compared with the views of others, please answer the following questions:

1. What web 2.0 tools and social networking sites do you use in everyday life? (Google, YouTube, Skype, Facebook, Amazon, eBay, Wikipedia, etc.)
2. What experience do you have of their use in management? Do you regularly use the internet at work? (email, web resources, etc.)
3. What is your opinion on the value of web 2.0 tools in institutional management? What disadvantages can you see?

Session 2 – Management Communications with Web 2.0

Introduction

This session explores a number of web 2.0 communications tools and services that are being used by educational institutions, both in the support of learners and in the management of the institution itself. It will show how companies like Google and Microsoft make applications and computing resources available for use by education at no cost and will give examples of how institutions are using such resources in their management communications.

A key message in the session will be that web 2.0 communications tools are not only very cost effective as many of them are freely available to use, they are also very convenient and user-friendly, having been designed for people with relatively low levels of computer skills.

During the module you will be encouraged to try out the web 2.0 communications tools and to discuss your experience and opinions on potential use in educational management.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this session you will:

- Be familiar with a range of web 2.0 communications tools;
- Have considered their use in institutional management and formed a view about their potential benefits;
- Have created an action plan for the evaluation of web 2.0 communications tools in preparation for a briefing document for institutional managers.

What you have to do

In this module you will be introduced to a number of web 2.0 communications tools. In each case you will be expected to try out each of the tools, including registering as a user of the application and, where appropriate, downloading the software. Having completed each of the exercises, you will be invited to share your experience and opinions in the discussion forum.

2.1 Introduction to Web 2.0 Communications

Day-to-day management communications in institutions is mainly carried out by telephone, email and in memo/letter format. Increasingly, staff portals are being used for news and announcements and collaborative applications such as [Sharepoint](#) are being used to support teamwork and the sharing of management documents. All institutions have websites and these also typically include management resources and staff information.

In general, the software used for computer based communications is proprietary, although increasingly institutions are choosing more cost-effective open source options. Currently, the most commonly adopted open source applications include [Mozilla Firefox](#) and [Google Chrome](#) as web browsers and [Open Office](#) for document creation. Such applications, though



free to use, still need to be downloaded and installed on the institution's computers. An alternative and potentially even more cost-effective solution is offered by the use of web 2.0 and cloud computing services.

With these services, the company providing the service hosts the application on their own servers and allows individual users to upload and download their own personal documents and other resources at no cost. Often, the service providers make their money by including advertising on the website, which would be intrusive and inappropriate for educational use. However, a number of the biggest companies make special provision for institutions to encourage their use by teachers and students.

Google is one of these companies and this module will refer to [Google Apps for Education](#) a number of times as it has good examples of the kind of services being offered. [Google's website](#) presents the communications services.

It can be seen that Google provides a free email service with a significant amount of storage, as well as text, voice and video chat services. Each of these communications methods will be explored in the following sections of this module.

2.2 Email

Email has become a primary communications method, both at work and socially. The exchange of text messages can also be used to share documents by attaching them to the message being sent. Email services are normally provided as part of the website package delivered by an internet service provider. An educational institution would typically host their own website and email system or may decide to pay for an externally hosted service. In each case emails can be accessed by the users using an installed email application, such as Microsoft Outlook, on their computer or, these days, through the Internet using a web browser.

There are a number of different web 2.0 email services now available for education that provide an alternative to institutional systems. As noted in the introduction to this module, some service providers make special provision for education and supply their services free of charge and also with no advertising. This makes them an especially attractive option for institutions as it saves them both licensing costs and server costs. An increasing number of institutions are now taking advantage of these services.

This section will consider two email service providers as examples, each with case studies that illustrate their use and benefits in educational institutions. The first is Google Gmail. [Google's web page](#) provides a product overview.

[Here](#) you can find a case study that describes how Trinity College Dublin has implemented Gmail and the benefits it reports.

It should be noted that the migration of email systems for the entire institution is no small task and Google suggest that 6 weeks is a realistic time frame to complete, populate and test the new system before it goes live. It is likely that, if an institution was planning to implement Gmail, it will implement the entire Google Apps for Education suite of services. This includes calendar and document sharing, collaborative groups, website hosting and other functionality.



A similar group of services is offered by the other provider, [Microsoft Live](#). The website shows that, in addition to a free email service, online access is provided to Microsoft Office documents as well as the same level of online storage capacity offered by Google.

[This case study](#) describes the benefits reported by an institution that implemented the system:

It can be seen that web 2.0 based enterprise level email systems that are fully functional, scalable and trustworthy are serious options for any educational institution. The websites presented here allow you to explore the information in much more detail should you wish.

What do you think about the web 2.0 services described here? Are there any reasons why they shouldn't be considered as a serious and beneficial option for your institution? Post your views in the [discussion forum](#).

2.3 Text Messaging

The use of email is an 'asynchronous' way of communicating. In other words, it does not assume both the sender and receiver of messages are online at the same time. There can therefore be some delay before the receiver reads and responds to a message and this is a feature of email communications. Text messaging, Instant Messaging and online Chat, however, are methods of online text communications that are more immediate. These are covered in this section.

1. Text Messaging

The sending of SMS text messages to the mobile phones of individuals or groups of students can be a very effective way of communicating. The same applies to management communications with staff. For those individuals working in education, SMS can be an easy-to-use, timesaving, efficient and cost effective tool. With the ability to communicate en masse, on and off campus and within seconds, expenses from traditional approaches such as mail can be dramatically reduced.

The text messages appear on the screen of the recipient's mobile phone, normally with an audible alert to let them know. As they are sent via the user's commercial mobile phone service provider, there will be normally a small cost per text.

An example of a national education management focussed text messaging services is provided by the UK educational networking service [JANET](#).

This [case study](#) provides a brief report about the effectiveness of the JANETtxt messaging service from Uxbridge College. There are links to five other reports on this page for you to view.

2. Instant Messaging

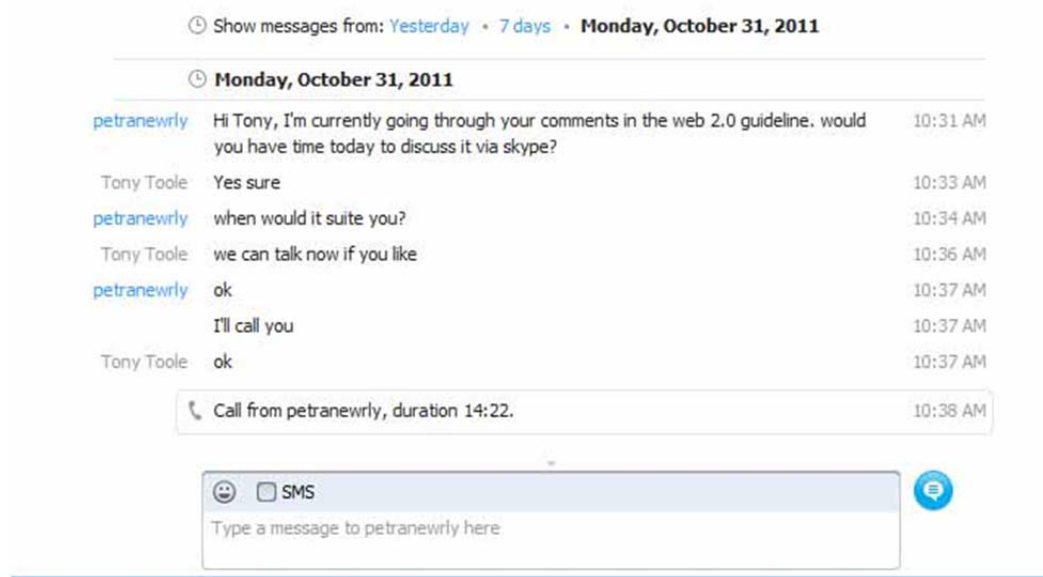
As well as SMS text messaging to mobile phones, Instant Messaging (IM) is another very effective way of communicating between personal computers, web enabled mobile phones, iPads and similar devices. In recent years, IM functionality has been provided by a growing number of social networking sites in addition to their core services.

One of these has been [Skype](#), the provider of free internet voice and video communications. The advantage of services like this is that you can see when any of your contacts are on line and can engage in a text message exchange as explained on the [official website](#).

When you send an instant message to a contact who is online, it will instantly appear in a window on their screen where they can read it.

3. Text Chat

Using a web 2.0 Chat Tool typically involves two or more people online at the same time having a text-based dialogue. All of the participants will be reading the postings of the others and will be responding immediately. Skype also has this function as an extension of its IM service and the following window shows a brief Chat discussion. Each of the participants (there are only two in this example) can enter a comment in the message window at the bottom, and the comments are then listed above in the sequence that they were entered.



We have introduced Skype as a popular web 2.0 communications service that facilitates text-based communications. We will also be using it in the next section when we look at voice and video communications. The session will then conclude with a practical exercise where you will download and install Skype (if you do not already have it) and will have the opportunity to try out all of the communications methods covered.

2.4 Voice and Video Communications

Introduction

As noted in the previous section on web 2.0 text communications, the Skype application began as a voice communications service that enabled users to make free phone calls globally. Since that time it has developed to include the SMS, IM and Chat text functions already described. It also now provides video communications between users and small-scale videoconferencing. We will continue to use Skype as representative of the web 2.0 tools providing these services, but will also include links to other applications offering similar services.

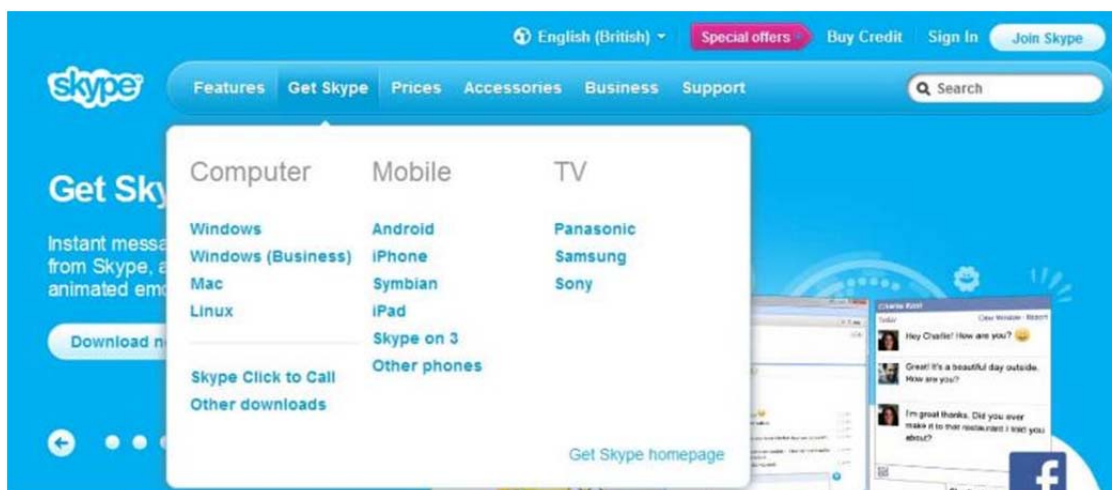
Online voice and video communications are increasingly changing the way management meetings are planned and organised. There are some key reasons for this:

- The quality of online voice and video communications has improved to the point that effective online meetings are assured. There can be no doubt that quality will continue to improve as technology develops further;
- Simultaneous voice and video online communications have the same cost regardless of where the participants are located globally. Increasingly, service providers are offering the services free;
- Online meetings offer significant time, resource and cost savings for institutions. Managers do not need to travel and can participate from wherever they have internet access; travel costs as well as time are saved; energy conservation is achieved;
- The benefits apply at all levels and geographic distances. Online meetings between managers in different parts of the same institution can make just as much logical sense as international meetings.

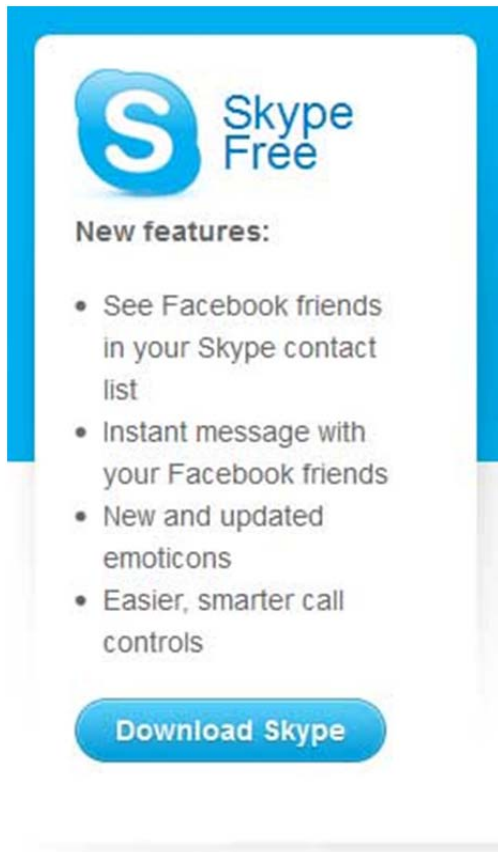
Other providers have followed Skype in offering free voice and video chat services. This includes major companies such as [Google](#) and also [AOL](#). They all have similar functionality, and you may wish to follow these links and come to your own decision about which suits your needs and management approach. To illustrate the functionality, and to prepare for the practical exercise in the next session, you will now have the opportunity to explore the voice and video features of Skype. If you already have Skype installed and have registered for a Skype account, then you can skip this section (click [here](#) to jump to the next section).


Installing and Setting up Skype

To download and install the Skype application go to www.skype.com. When the window opens, click on 'Get Skype'. You can see from the dropdown menu that there are versions available for a range of computers and mobile devices. Select the appropriate link to download.



When you do so you will be offered the free version or the 'premium' version for which you subscribe. Select the free version.



Click on 'Download Skype' and follow the instructions to save the download and install the application. When Skype is installed, launch the application from the start menu or from the Skype logo  on the desktop. You will then be invited to sign in with your Skype name and password or, if you do not have one, to create a Skype account:

A screenshot of the Skype website's sign-in and account creation page. The top navigation bar includes the Skype logo and links for 'Features', 'Get Skype', 'Prices', 'Accessories', 'Business', and 'Support'. The main heading is 'Create an account or sign in', followed by the text 'It only takes a minute or two - then you'll be ready to call your friends for free once you've downloaded and installed Skype.' Below this are two buttons: 'Sign in' and 'Create an account'. The 'Sign in' section contains a 'Skype Name' input field with a link 'Forgotten your Skype Name?', a 'Password' input field with a link 'Forgotten your password?', and a green 'Sign me in' button. To the right of the input fields is a padlock icon and a list of benefits: 'Safe & Secure', 'Quick & Easy', 'Manage your account', and 'Change your settings'.

When you have signed in, the main Skype window will appear:



To communicate with Skype you need to have a list of contacts who have agreed that you can call them. If you are new to Skype, then you will have no Skype contacts in your contacts list. To populate your contacts list, click on 'Add a contact' and a window will appear where you can enter their Skype name (if you know it), their email address (if you know it), their phone number or their actual name. It will then search through its database of registered users and will display users corresponding to the information you have given (just one if you've entered an email address, a long list if you've entered the name 'John Smith').

When you have selected a contact, Skype will send them a message asking them to confirm that they are happy for you to add them as a contact (at this point their name will appear in your contacts list next to a grey Skype logo with a question mark on it). When your contact responds in the affirmative, the questionmark on the logo will disappear. When the logo turns from a grey outline to a green filled version, your contact is online and able to receive calls.

Before you first use Skype, it is sensible to check your voice and video equipment. The most commonly used equipment would be a headset with microphone, and a webcam. In your contacts list you will see 'Skype Test Call' which is their voice testing service. Connect your equipment and click on the name in the list and then on 'Call': a message will be read to you and you will be invited to record some speech which will then be played back to you. If you can hear your recorded message, then your audio setup is working correctly. To check your video, click on 'Call' in the grey menu bar at the top of the Skype window. From the drop-down menu select 'Video' and then 'Video settings'. If your video settings are correct for your webcam then you should see yourself in the display. If not, select 'Webcam settings' and select the appropriate device.

You are now set up to make and receive voice and video calls.



Using Skype

To make a call, click on the name of your contact and from the green options select either 'Call' or 'Video Call'. With the first you will have voice communications, with the second, voice and video. The selection will cause a call message to appear on your contact's screen and, when they accept the call, the connection is established.

You can add other contacts to the same call by clicking on the '+' symbol and then 'Add people to this conversation'. A separate window will open with all your contacts and you can select those you want to join the group. They will all be called in the same way and, when they accept, will be participants in the conversation/meeting.

At the same time as conversations are proceeding, you can use the message/chat facility to communicate in parallel with the voice/video communications. This is an increasingly common feature of online videoconference management meetings that allows immediate comments and responses to be made without interrupting the current speaker.

As with all web 2.0 tools and services, experience and appreciation of value is only really gained by use. The final section in this session invites you to explore the web 2.0 communications features we have covered through a practical exercise. You will then be in a position to share your experience in the discussion forum.

2.5 Communications Exercise and Discussion

This exercise is designed to give you an opportunity of using web 2.0 based communications in a real life management activity.

As part of your work in your institution you will have management responsibilities that include arranging and participating in management meetings. It is likely that these are normally carried out face-to-face and are probably organised by email or internal memo. Rooms will be booked, light refreshments organised, documents circulated, secretarial support provided.

The proposed activity here is for you to arrange for one of your regular meetings of this kind to be carried out online using Skype. It is suggested that you choose a relatively brief meeting with up to 6 participants that is scheduled to take place within the next two weeks. You will organise the meeting by email, explaining that it is a trial to evaluate the benefits of meeting in this way and that their feedback will be central to that evaluation. All the participants will need to have access to Skype and to have Skype accounts. The sequence will therefore be:

1. Emailing all the participants and finding out whether they use Skype. If they do not, then recommending they read through this section of the module and follow the guidance in setting up a Skype account and installing the software;
2. Arranging for all participants to become contacts with each other and for basic Skype calls to be carried out to test connectivity;
3. Agree a time for commencing the meeting and, at that time, you will call all the participants, adding new people to the conversation in sequence;
4. Complete the meeting using both voice, video and text communications as appropriate;



5. At the conclusion of the meeting, invite all the participants to provide feedback on the effectiveness of the method and the balance of benefits against drawbacks.

Session 3 – Student Administration and Support with Web 2.0

Introduction

This session describes how essential day-to-day information is made available to students using web 2.0 tools. It gives examples of how course and personal support is provided, including residential support, library support opportunities, local area information including transport and weather, and it shows how this is typically integrated with the students' own social environments and mobile devices.

The examples show how Facebook, Twitter, Wikis and Second Life have all been used in student administration and support. The examples also include support provided for staff in planning and implementing web 2.0 services for students, and the session concludes with a reflective exercise.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this session you will:

- Have seen how a range of web 2.0 tools and social networking sites have been used for student administration and support;
- Have had the opportunity to explore the support services and see the way they are being used by staff and students;
- Have considered the benefits of using web 2.0 tools in the support of VET students in your institution.

What you have to do

In this session you will be introduced to a number of different institutional web 2.0 student information and support services. You will be invited to explore them to whatever level of detail you wish and to consider their potential value in that aspect of management in your institution.

3.1 Enrolment and Induction

The use of web 2.0 tools in the management of student enrolment and induction are usually additional to the formal online admissions and enrolment processes carried out through the secure environment of the institutional web server. In general, they are there to provide information, advice and guidance for new students, to make them welcome and to give them the opportunity to meet and communicate with administrative and teaching staff and their fellow students. Some institutions encourage experienced students to become mentors for new students through social websites such as Facebook.

This section will use three examples from Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU) in the UK as indicative of the kind of services being made available using, firstly, Facebook as a place to welcome new students, provide information and respond to questions; secondly, Wikispaces as a place where staff share information and resources for student support and, finally, Second Life as a 3D environment for student mentoring and induction.

The MMU Facebook page for new students:



This can be seen to be an informal 'chat' environment that would be familiar to most students. As well as using web 2.0 tools directly with students, MMU is also using them with staff. [The following Wiki](#) is being used as a collaborative area for staff to develop and discuss student support services.

A number of institutions are exploring the benefits of using the social networking application Second Life as an engaging way of supporting students. [This page](#) shows how MMU is developing this approach.

These examples of the use of web 2.0 tools and social networking sites to assist in student enrolment and induction are typical of recent developments in institutions. It would be true to say that such developments are at a relatively early stage of development and some institutions are not yet using web 2.0 resources at all, preferring to rely on their own website for promoting their courses and communicating with students.

However, there is a view that student support services can benefit significantly from the use of web 2.0 tools. This is not only because such tools are very familiar to the students, it is also because the staff responsible for student support can develop and provide their services without the technical support they would need to change their institutional website.

This is illustrated by the first example in the next section on student information and advice.

3.2 Information and Advice

As noted in the previous section, the ability to rapidly update online information and make it available to staff and students is very valuable in institutional management and

administration. Perhaps the most widely used method currently is by email, and the ability to send files with messages and to create mailing lists for efficient distribution to groups of colleagues, makes it a very effective means of communicating.

Another important online tool for modern business is the collaborative website, where managers can share documents across the company and collaborate in document development. With both email and collaborative sharing there are a range of commercial software applications available: Microsoft [Outlook](#) for email and Microsoft [Sharepoint](#) for enterprise-wide collaboration, for example.

However, as noted elsewhere in this module, there are open source and web 2.0 alternatives now available which are potentially much more cost-effective and institutions are having to seriously consider them in a market where competition is increasing and balancing cost against income, particularly from public funding sources, is a challenge.

Additionally, there are new innovative services emerging from the web 2.0 world that are demonstrating value for institutional managers. Twitter is one of these: a [micro-blogging](#) service where short messages are broadcast in a rapid and accessible way. The value for those responsible for student information and advice has been demonstrated by Sheffield University. The Student Services Information Desk uses Twitter extensively:



If the students have a Twitter account, then they can follow the [SSiD](#) Tweets and automatically keep up to date with information and advice whenever they visit their home page.

Another way in which institutions are providing information and advice to students is through their mobile phones and tablet computers. A good example of recent developments is Mobile Oxford, an award winning student information service provided by [Oxford University Computing Services](#). This is an open source software application available to the educational community that draws in information from a range of sources and makes them available to the students (and staff).

The application provides access to the institutional libraries, to the online learning environment and to course assessment results, as well as practical information about



current traffic conditions, parking availability, weather, and range of other useful data. It demonstrates how institutions are exploiting the availability of web-based information and making it available using open source and web 2.0 resources.

3.3 Supporting Management and Administrative Staff

It will be clear that the use of web 2.0 tools in educational management and administration is developing rapidly and will continue to do so as more functionality becomes available and its value is demonstrated. However, it should also be recognised that many institutions are only at an early stage of implementation. The expertise and experience to effectively exploit the technologies is not necessarily in place, and convincing evidence of value has yet to be demonstrated to many management and administrative staff.

As well as making services available to students, therefore, there needs to be a continuous awareness-raising and skills development programme for staff. This has been recognised by institutional management and there are good examples of how it is being promoted.

The staff portal at [University College London](#) shows how they are promoting the use of the emerging web 2.0 toolkit in a very pragmatic way. There is clear information about the range of tools, their potential use, examples of their use, but also a recognition that decisions on adoption must be centred on the users: the academic staff, the administrators and the managers.

This session on student administration and support has provided some examples of how institutions are approaching the use of web 2.0 tools in this context. However, it has really only been a window on what is currently being implemented and on the future potential for institutional management. You, as a manager, will require a lot of additional information if you are new to considering web 2.0 tools for student information and support. The resources provided here were intended to be a gateway to further investigation by you and the staff of your institution.

By now you will have begun to form your own opinion about the potential benefits, and also the key issues that you will need to be convinced by before you begin to introduce new ways of supporting students using web 2.0 resources. The final section in this session is a self-evaluation exercise to help articulate your current position.

3.4 Review and Discussion

In this session you will have seen examples of how institutions have used web 2.0 tools in the way they inform and support their students. Whilst exploring the resources, you will have been reflecting on issues of implementation in your institution. To conclude the session you are now invited to articulate those reflections and to share them in the session discussion forum. To structure your reflections, you might consider the following issues:

1. The means by which your institution currently provides initial student information and support
 1. Your prospectus: hard copy/by post/online/searchable/downloadable
 2. Your application process: by post/online/admin support/automated/third party managed



3. Course information: hard copy/online/LMS/tutor support/admin support/FAQ
4. Induction: face-to-face/online/formal/social/individual advice/Q&A
2. The means by which your institution provides on-course information and support
 1. Academic support/personal support/financial support/careers support/social and sports support
 2. Face-to-face/online/individual/collective/collaborative/email/phone/written
 3. Scheduled/on-demand/planned/named advisor/recorded/reviewed
3. The potential of web 2.0 tools to improve current processes
 1. Flexible/customisable provision of course and institutional information
 2. Personalised/adaptive induction process
 3. Multi-functional information and support services
 4. Value added contributions to academic, personal and social student support

Having considered these issues you are now invited to write two short paragraphs:

1. Summarising the areas of student information and support that, based on the information in this session, would definitely benefit from the use of online web 2.0 tools
2. Summarising the areas where the use of web 2.0 tools would, in your view, be either inappropriate or could not be adequately satisfied

Session 4 – Marketing the Institution with Web 2.0

Introduction

This session demonstrates how educational institutions have used web 2.0 and social networking sites to promote their courses, services to students and the attractions of the institutional environment. All institutions have their own websites through which they market their services, but increasingly they are using social networking sites to expand their exposure to potential customers. The session will give examples of current practice and will conclude with a web 2.0 marketing planning exercise.

The description of current practice presented here will use the UK Open University as a typical example of how institutions are exploiting social media for marketing. Links to other institutional marketing are included for comparison and will show that marketing in this way is becoming increasingly popular.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this session you will:

- Have seen how institutions have been using Web 2.0 and social media to promote their courses and other services;
- Have considered how such online resources could be used in the marketing of your own institution;
- Have created a marketing plan for the future promotion of your institution using web 2.0 resources.

What you have to do

A range of examples will be presented that show how web 2.0 resources are being used to market institutions. You will examine each of these examples and will form an opinion of their potential effectiveness in delivering the intended marketing message. You will then be invited to develop a web 2.0 marketing plan for your own institution and will share your conclusions with others in the discussion forum.

4.1 Marketing with Web 2.0

Marketing the educational services of an institution to potential students and employers is no different to the marketing of products and services by any company to its intended customers. The four P's of marketing theory: product, pricing, promotion and placement are generally regarded as valid and, no doubt, each institutional marketing strategy will have optimised the mix for their own targeted market segment.

However, the traditional marketing channels for institutions tend to be one-way. The prospectus is the main promotional instrument and is typically made available in printed form or online, where it can be downloaded. Other information is provided through the institutional website where there are links to student support services, social and entertainment information, as well as information about the region and its attractions.



There is usually the ability to ask questions and get additional specific detail, normally by email, but this is typically the limit of customer interactivity provision on institutional websites.

The nature of social media is profoundly different. The interactivity that is central to the web 2.0 environment has the potential to energise the marketing message and to spread it in a viral fashion. The inbuilt cross-linking of YouTube videos, Slideshare documents and other cloud-based resources means that the web can be collectively treated as a marketing engine that circulates information across self-selecting global communities of interest.

[Flitcher](#) proposes seven strategies for marketing in a web 2.0 world. An adaptation for education would be:

1. **Learn about social media:** ensure that marketing staff are fully familiar with the web 2.0 tools available and their marketing potential, and that they continually monitor how competitors are using them;
2. **Create a web 2.0 marketing plan:** build the affordances of web tools into institutional planning, with specific marketing goals for each;
3. **Actively participate:** ensure that web 2.0 marketing is a dynamic process by the institution with responsive communications;
4. **Be remarkable:** stand out from the crowd by emphasising the unique selling points of the institution and using the web to communicate those in the most effective way;
5. **Promote viral dissemination:** encourage bookmarking and tagging of your web pages, post content on sites like Flickr and YouTube, syndicate everything, create newsfeeds, use blogging and micro-blogging;
6. **Be part of the social media revolution:** innovate. Create a hit list of the most popular social media sites and plan how to use them for promoting the institution;
7. **Evaluate effectiveness:** gather information from your customers about their use of your web 2.0 presence and use that to improve marketing effectiveness.

This session will provide a number of examples of how these strategies have been implemented by institutions. The UK Open University has been particularly effective in using social media for promotion and the examples will centre on its work. Links to other institutional web 2.0 marketing will also be provided.

4.2 YouTube and iTunes

Many educational institutions are making use of the Internet to promote themselves and their courses. They are aware of the widespread popularity of YouTube as a video sharing website and a large number have set up their own YouTube video channels. The UK Open University is a good example of this way of marketing (click the image to open the website in a new window):



Institutions are also aware of the popularity of Apple iTunes as a music and video source for their mobile phones, tablet computers such as the iPad, and their PCs. Apple has set up a service in iTunes specifically for education and many institutions are using it to promote their institutions and to make sample courses and materials freely available. The [UK Open University](#) is, again, a good example of how it is being used for marketing.

By exploring this website you will see the various offerings being made by the Open University and will be able to judge how both YouTube and iTunes could be used by your institution to promote your services. Later in this session you will be invited to create your own web 2.0 marketing plan, but before that we will look at how Facebook and Twitter are being used by institutions.

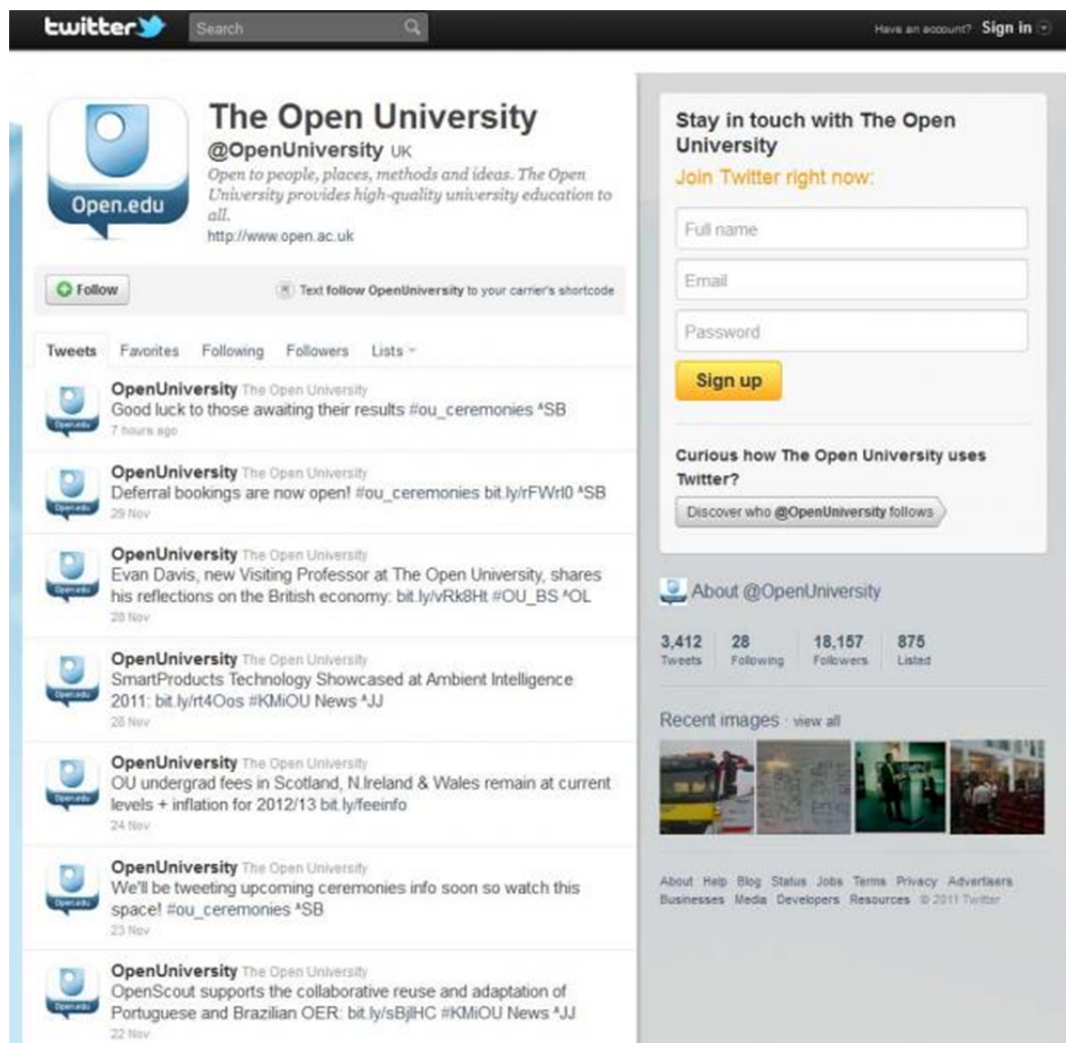
4.3 Facebook and Twitter

As well as resource sharing through YouTube and iTunes, educational institutions are also promoting themselves through popular social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter. Facebook actively supports this activity through a page dedicated to educators.

The page is exactly the same as a normal personal Facebook account for social communications, but is specifically for education related communications and includes advice on how educators can best use the site for both teaching and promoting their institution (click to open in a new window):

The screenshot displays the Facebook interface for the 'Facebook in Education' page. At the top, there's a blue header with the Facebook logo and login fields for Email and Password. Below this is a navigation bar with a 'Sign Up' button and the text 'Facebook helps you connect and share with the people in your life.' The main content area is divided into several sections. On the left, there's a sidebar with a 'Wall' section and a list of links: Info, Resources, Safety, Stories, Photos, Videos, Notes, Links, and Poll. The main content area features a 'Wall' section with a post from 'Facebook in Education' about the importance of social media sites like Facebook at work. The post includes a photo of a person at a computer and text stating that one in three college graduates said that freedom to use social media sites like Facebook at work was more important to them than financial compensation. The post has 44 shares and 29 comments. Below the post, there's a section titled 'Using Facebook Questions on Your Page' with a video thumbnail and text encouraging page admins to watch the video to learn how to use Facebook Questions. The right sidebar contains a section titled 'Similar Facebook Pages' with links to 'Facebook Security', 'Facebook Safety', and 'MySQL at Facebook'. The bottom of the page shows the number of likes (354,712) and the number of people talking about this (1,121).

In a similar way the highly popular micro-blogging service Twitter is being used to promote education by a number of institutions. As explained in the '[Blogging for Teachers](#)' module in this online series, Twitter is a social communications service used for short message exchanges. Just like Facebook, it is being used for marketing and the UK Open University is, again, a good example of how this is being done (click on the image to open the website in a new window):



This session has introduced a number of examples of how educational institutions have used web 2.0 tools to promote themselves and their courses as part of their marketing strategies. The session will conclude with an exercise for you to create a draft marketing plan for your institution using similar tools.

4.4 Creating a Web 2.0 Marketing Plan

To conclude this session on marketing with Web 2.0, you are invited to create a draft marketing plan for your institution that exploits the internet in the same way that the examples here have demonstrated. As an institutional manager, you may not have responsibility for marketing and there may be others who are responsible for that aspect of the business. However, it would be normal for all senior managers to be aware of, and involved in, discussions about the way the institution communicates its services to its intended customers.

You will have considered the examples given here and, no doubt, will have formed your own opinion about how such web 2.0 tools could be exploited in the promotion of your own institution. The exercise here is for you to prepare a presentation for your senior management team that details:

1. How other institutions, similar to your own, are marketing themselves online using social media;



2. How your institution might establish a presence in selected social websites, and with what marketing goals;
3. How your web 2.0 presence, once established, should be made optimally discoverable in web searches;
4. What social websites you personally would recommend and the promotional benefits and potential customers they would be directed towards.

It is suggested that you write brief notes covering each of these issues.



Session 5 – Making Resources Available with Web 2.0

Introduction

This final session in the Web 2.0 for Institutional Managers module will consider the open educational resources movement, how it relates to the use of web 2.0 tools and social media, and what conclusions can be drawn about the future direction of education and its management.

All of the modules in this series have considered the use and benefits of web 2.0 tools in vocational education and training. A key feature of all of them has been the fact that they are all free to use, in general are hosted by the providing organisations and, hence, are part of what is called 'cloud computing'. Clearly, the benefit to educational institutions is that they offer services that can be used at very low cost.

Earlier in this module we have examined teaching resources that institutions have been making freely available online through YouTube and iTunes. There has also been reference to the global movement to make such resources generally available. This session will provide further information about this trend and invite you to consider what it means for you as an institutional manager.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of this session you will:

- Have seen how institutions are making teaching resources freely available online;
- Have considered the rationale behind the open educational resources movement;
- Have formed your own opinion about what it means for the future of educational delivery.

What you have to do

This session is largely a reflective exercise based on case study evidence. You will be presented with a number of examples of open educational resources and some evidence about how they are being used. You will be invited to draw conclusions about what it means for your institution and in your area of responsibility and to share those conclusions in the discussion forum.



5.1 Open Educational Resources

This module has already discussed the fact that educational institutions are making teaching resources available on line through YouTube and iTunes as part of their promotion of the institution and to allow potential learners to sample the teaching they will receive if they then enrol. This is also happening through other web 2.0 and social media applications such as [Slideshare](#), which strongly supports educational usage, [Flickr](#) which allows users to share images, and other providers.

However, beyond this promotional use of web 2.0 by institutions, there is also a growing consensus that the sharing of teaching content on the internet will eventually become the norm. This was a view originally acted on by [MIT](#) in the late 1990s when they made all their materials freely available online for use by anyone. The rationale behind the movement was that it was the quality of student support, assessment and accreditation that was of value, not the learning content.

The movement has since grown globally with many hundreds of institutions making their resources available at no cost. This is a movement that many regard as very significant for the future of education, indicative of potential globalisation, and very much in keeping with the use of web 2.0 tools for delivery and learner support. It is, however, also quite a new concept for traditional teachers and institutions. [Open Educational Resources](#) is a website that provides in-depth information about the topic and it is recommended that you spend some time exploring the content.

There is a lot of information here, and a lot of links to other websites. It is a resource that should provide you with all the information you need to form an opinion about the future distribution and sharing of educational content in the web 2.0 age.

At a certain point in your exploration of this information you will come to an initial conclusion about what it means for your institution in the immediate future. You will also have developed a personal opinion about how it fits into the support of learners using web 2.0 tools. The next section invites you to complete a reflective exercise that considers how your institution and your role within it will change as a result of these developments.

5.2 Reflection and Final Discussion

The issues covered in this module would be challenging for any institutional manager. The world is changing as a result of the development of the Internet, the emergence of web 2.0 tools and the influence of social media in all aspects of our social and working lives. To determine what this means for the future of education and how, as a manager, to prepare for it, is not easy even for specialists in the area of technology enhanced learning.

It is hoped, however, that the information and resources provided have raised awareness of the potential benefits of using web 2.0 tools in the management of institutions and how the availability of open educational resources could increase the quality, variety and cost-effectiveness of delivery.

You are now invited to complete a reflective exercise based on the issues in the module. In a document of no more than 500 words, you should summarise:

1. Your overall conclusions about the use and potential of web 2.0 tools in the management of an institution;



2. Your overall conclusions about the use and benefits of online open educational resources;
3. Your personal action plan for taking these issues forward in your managerial role.

This will be a short document, but not an easy exercise. You will probably want to go back to a number of the online resources to gather more information or confirm detail. You should not conclude the exercise until you have established a firm personal view that is accurately expressed in the document.