



Abertay
University

LEARNING TO LINK-IN

Teaching undergraduate sport students how to professionally network via social media using a Pebblepad platform

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- The modern university has a responsibility to produce employable graduates (Knight & Yorke, 2003; Schomburg & Teichler, 2006)
- Activities to enhance employment skills should be integral programme activities (Knight & Yorke, 2003)
- E-portfolios allow students to document skills, knowledge and experiences that they are gaining – mentoring and guidance when collating this information can enhance the e-portfolio content (Greenberg, 2004)
- Assessing e-portfolio work can heighten reflection, organisational and planning skills, increase confidence with technology, and allow for creativity (Strivens, Baume, Grant, Owen, Ward & Nicol, 2009).

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- Increasingly, professional social networks are being used to source ‘experts’ and for recruitment purposes (Backstrom, Huttenlocher, Kleinberg & Lan, 2006; Cohen & Clemens, 2005; Skeels & Grudin, 2009).
- 92% of employers use social media to recruit; 1 in 6 employees state that their current post is as a consequence of social media. LinkedIn is the most popular, with 38% of job seekers using this platform to enable them to find work (Jobvite, 2012).
- LinkedIn has a membership of more than 225 million (7.9 million in the UK).
- In a highly competitive job market self-promotion and self-assertion are key (Mayrhofer, Steyrer, Meyer, Strunk, Schiffinger & Iellatchitch, 2005; Knight and Yorke, 2003)

N.B. Netiquette

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Title = submit in Pebblepad a Webfolio asset that is maximally 1000 words long but acts as a 'Linked-in'-style professional connections platform that showcases your skills, strengths and experiences to prospective future employers

To pass this coursework, the student is expected to:

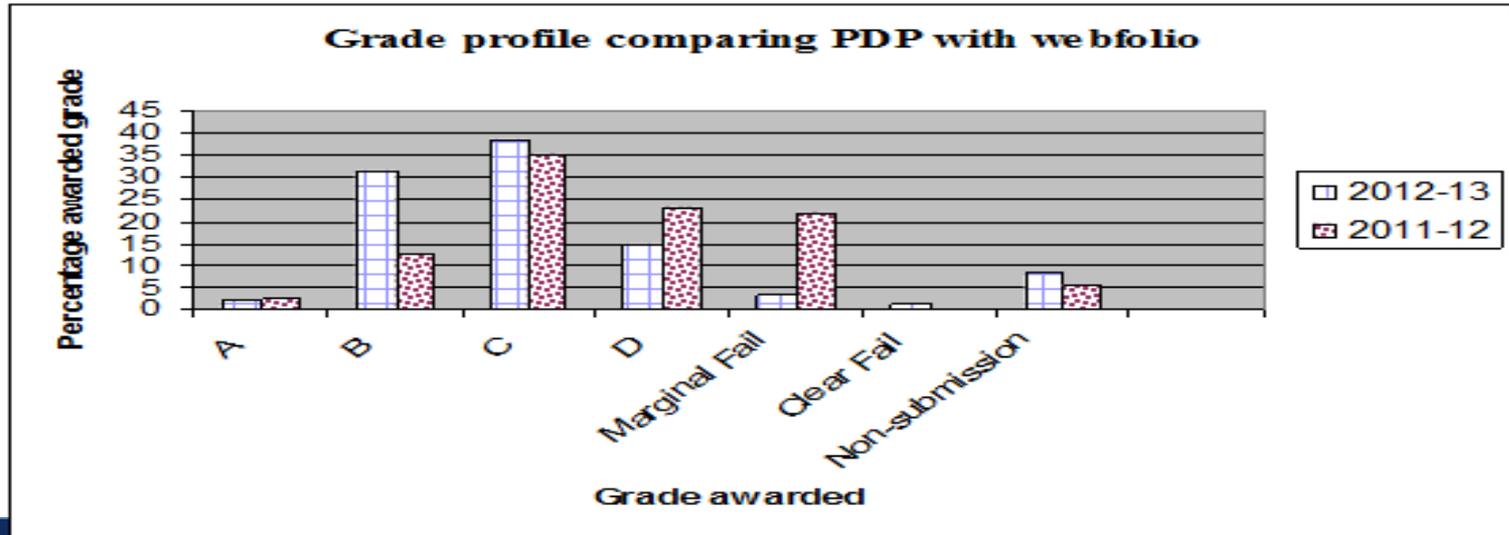
- (a) Choose a template which balances the need to be professional with the ability to catch a prospective employer's attention.
- (b) Provide a summary of skills, experiences, and personal achievements/assets that would act as a 'showcase' of what you can offer prospective employers in the sport and exercise industry.
- (c) Articulate these skills, experiences, and achievements/assets in a manner which demonstrates an ability to balance detail with conciseness.
- (d) Demonstrate an ability to be self-reflective.

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Outcomes

One hundred and forty-three students registered to take the module in 2012/13, compared to one hundred and twenty-nine students in 2011/12.

Figure 1 Spread of grades for the webfolio in 2012/13 compared to objective setting assessment in 2011/12



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- Whilst the modal grade for the assessment remained a C, significantly more students were awarded a B grade or better for the webfolio ($\chi^2=11.97$, $p<0.01$).
- The grade point average for the PDP in 2011-12 was 11.0 (D band) compared to 12.25 (C band) for the new webfolio element.
- Grades and individual feedback for the webfolio were available within 13 working days compared to 18 working days the previous session, despite an 11% increase in student numbers.

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- Students appreciated the opportunity to present what they had to offer to a prospective employer in this format.
- They also appreciated being guided via the feedback toward what information was appropriate to include, as well as how best to present it in this medium.
- Positive comment was also made regarding the usefulness of undertaking work on their curriculum vitae with support and guidance from the module team.
- *‘it hadn’t occurred to me that what I perceived as an innocent photo of me having fun might be interpreted differently by an employer’*

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- *'I found this a really interesting exercise to do, as I hadn't ever thought about the need to promote myself to future employers via the web'*
- *'I liked being able to choose how I organised the information but it was difficult to know if I was including the right type of information for an employer'.*
- Original brief was 2 pages but then changed to 1000 words to allow students to organise content.
- Staff felt that students could engage more readily with formative feedback.

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- Generic feedback:-
- *'A grades - well-written, well-presented, fluent and concise pieces which excluded personal information but made it clear what the student was studying, stage of study, achievements and accolades as well as qualifications. The front page contained a good amount of relevant information that would stimulate the reader to want to go beyond the first page. These webfolios also indicated what experiences the student had had (including placement) and included the tasks you were required to do but then also linked this to skills gained. There was a nice summary of strengths also linked to evidence (weaknesses were not included), and a brief sentence on future aspirations. The student had also considered where they were utilising theory learned in practice, and there were some nice reflections on learning/development. There was limited listing of information, allowing the reader to appraise the students skills in terms of constructing a short piece of prose. A positive attitude emerged from the work.*

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- Generic feedback:-
- ***Fail grades*** - *these were generally too brief, too personal in style and information, and made insufficient reference to experiences from the domain of sport and exercise eg. had omitted to mention placement, or to consider skill/strength development’.*
- Points of consideration – managing Reasonable Adjustment for this assessment brief
- Conclusion:-
- Appraising the attributes of communication skill, particularly in respect of self-promotion in a professional context, has proved to be a valued tool for this student population
- <https://atlas.pebblepad.co.uk/atlas/abertay/Viewer/Submission/View/2512/93499/13896288000000000/3hdH3xcMwxmwjybpj8Gryyh34y/3hdH3xcMwxmwjc8W84zk3bmrjZ>
- <https://atlas.pebblepad.co.uk/atlas/abertay/Viewer/Submission/View/2512/93694/13896288000000000/3hdH3xcGq8k4rhcrcxspmfZdfMZ/3hdH3xcGq8k4rywqb3pWnt47nM>