

Mobile Capture Kit now available

I'm pleased to say Informatics now has a 'mobile capture kit' which can be booked out by colleagues. Perhaps you want to record a lecture in a space which currently doesn't have the hardware installed? Or a research seminar? Or a video answering a common question posed by your students?

You may already have some equipment which can support you in this. However, the Learning Technology service has packaged this up together for ease of use to support you in your teaching. It consists of the following:

- Windows laptop (HP Elitebook G3)
- USB Document Camera (HoverCam Solo 8Plus)
- Webcam (Logitech C920)
- USB mic (Snowball)
- Graphics tablet and pen (Wacom intuos)
- Tripod.

The laptop has the Echo360 Classroom Capture client installed which supports recording your screen, audio (via the Snowball mic) + video (via the Logitech webcam or HoverCam document camera).

It is worth noting that the mobile capture kit could also act as a mobile solution for video conferencing. Conferencing could be managed by a web browser (such as [Blackboard Collaborate](#)) or via an application such as Skype for Business.

If you'd like to borrow the kit, please [get in touch](#) with the learning technology service.



HP Elitebook G3



Logitech C920 webcam on tripod



Snowball USB microphone



Wacom tablet and pen



HoverCam Solo 8Plus + green screen

(Academic) Blogging Service

The Learning, Teaching and Web directorate within Information Services is starting a project that aims to deliver an Academic Blogging Service for the University. The service will support research and teaching and provide students and staff with a user-friendly blogging environment for sharing knowledge, reflecting on learning, and representing individual and group identity online.

They are currently in the user consultation phase. If you missed the workshops, you can still contribute your thoughts and ideas via the wiki.

Links are:

<https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/ABS/Academic+Blogg+Service>

<https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/ABS/User+Consultation>

For what it's worth, my main suggestion was to remove the word 'academic' from the service.

Project Management – a case study

Background

Edinburgh College of Art (ECA) frequently assesses to multiple learning outcomes (LOs). This means that for each assignment, a student will receive multiple grades and sections of feedback. In the past, ECA used a custom VLE (the Portal) to support this kind of assessment. Tutors would select grades for each learning outcome which was being assessed (often three) and feedback for each learning outcome. Students would then need to leave a piece of self-evaluation and 'submit' in order to access their tutor's feedback. As we migrated from this legacy VLE (the Portal) to the centrally supported VLE (Blackboard Learn) I went about trying to identify how best we could leverage the tools of the new system for a workflow which was familiar, and favoured, by teaching staff and students at ECA.

The challenge was as follows:

- Allow markers to leave multiple grades and feedback for each assignment
- Allow support staff to download these grades for upload to the central assessment and progression software with minimum intervention (and risk of mistakes)
- Allow students to receive their multiple grades and feedback with as few clicks as possible, and represented in a clear and consistent way.

I identified the rubric tool within Blackboard as the most useful tool we could use to replicate this workflow. While this addressed point 1, it did not address points 2 and 3:

- as it stood, administrators could only download the aggregated grade from the Blackboard Learn Grade Centre.
- students would have several clicks (many of which would not be intuitive) in order to access their feedback. Because of the complexity of this task, and the multitude of ways a student could give up half way through, communicating grades and feedback (essential to the learning process) would be severely compromised.

I proposed that ECA use some of its Information Services (IS) Apps development budget for investigating ways of addressing these issues. I met with a project manager from IS and we blocked out the best part of a day for exploring what the current challenges were, what the risks were for continuing with the current system, and the opportunities for developing something which could improve the experience.

I then took these initial findings to the development team in IS at a subsequent meeting. After ruling out some options, we proposed building a new building block for Blackboard which would provide a different view into the Grade Centre. This

would have to be accessed via a new tool, rather than a different stylesheet for the existing tool (My Grades). This would introduce a potential cause for confusion, but I balanced this against the potential confusion from the existing workflow and argued the benefits would outweigh the challenges.

The project then moved into the development phase. I was tasked with testing the Beta tool. The new tool went live for ECA staff and students in September 2016. After a year of successful deployment, the tool was made available to the rest of the University in September 2017.

[Project documentation.](#)

Hello colleagues!

My name is Alex Burford and I'm the new learning technologist for the School. If you're not sure what that means, my job is "to support the development and delivery of high quality and innovative teaching materials and methods for both on-site and distance-learning students".

I hope to develop this site into a useful support tool for colleagues as and when you have a questions about learning technology. Initially, the site will focus on centrally supported tools but as I get to know the School better, this may well widen out into more bespoke tools. Similarly, if you'd like this site to cover a particular product or service, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

I shall also be offering regular informal drop-in sessions and some more targeted training events. Please keep an eye on the Training page for further information on this. Meantime, if

you think I may be able to help you in your teaching, please don't hesitate to get in touch.