EJLT

Turned on, tuned in, but not dropped out: enhancing the student experience with popular social media platforms

Daniel Berger [1] & Charles Wild [2]

ABSTRACT

A paper which contends that social media platforms should be embraced by Universities, as opposed to being regarded with fear or suspicion, as they offer an invaluable resource to not only enhance educational communications, but also to embed into day-to-day practice the reality that students are active co-producers of content, rather than passive information consumers which the majority of University-based Managed Learning Environments (MLEs) have, to date, been seen to promote. Social media platforms are an inherent part of any modern student's life, and their associated apps, which provide the link between parent sites and a student's mobile phone, tablet or laptop, create an unprecedented immediacy in the way that messages are communicated between users.

The greater use of social media by university Schools and Departments provides them with an opportunity to mitigate many of the negative consequences that have arisen due to increasing reliance on MLEs. The associated information overload which students face in higher education threatens to create a disengaged, '*switched off*' student body rather than a community that remains *turned on and tuned in*'.

INTRODUCTION

The static paper-based School noticeboard is a thing of the past. There is no longer a need, or desire, for small groups of students to congregate around a central location. Advertised events are no longer printed on to poorly reproduced paper flyers and then pinned on to wall-mounted cork boards next to the School's administration office. However, the need and desire to stay plugged into the student social community has not disappeared; but has been transformed by modern developments in the way students interact with each other [3] .

As the educational landscape inevitably shifts towards a more flexible, cost-effective model of providing academic course elements on a distance learning basis, the opportunity for students to interact with each other outside of their immediate social or workshop group is dwindling [4] . This leads to a general lack of cohesion in the student cohort, which therefore impacts on student experience.

Social media platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter and non-proprietary online blogs, such as Wordpress, are an inherent part of the modern student's life, and the apps which provide the link between these parent sites and the student's mobile phones, tablets and laptops create an unprecedented immediacy in the way that messages are communicated between users. ' *The ubiquity of social media is no more apparent than at the university where the technology is transforming the ways students communicate, collaborate, and learn* ' [5] . However, as Roblyer et al observe, platforms such as Facebook have '*the potential to become a valuable resource to support their educational communications and collaborations*' [6] with academics.

Until now, social media has been primarily used as a separate entity, albeit importantly, to the 'at university'/offline student experience, perhaps as a means of promoting special events, such as social activities or extra-curricular lectures, or to raise general awareness for a type of regular practice, such as creating specialist groups for online discussions of certain aspects of university life [7] . We see this as a missed opportunity.

Correa et al define social media as providing ' *a mechanism for the audience to connect, communicate, and interact with each other and their mutual friends through instant messaging or social networking sites" but which has "that has little to do with traditional informational media use* ' [8] . The problem is that the designated 'social' areas of university-branded and operated managed learning environments and university-run online social media groups on non-proprietary platforms, have tended to be regarded by students as almost a 'sub-class' of online social interaction.

Many students either opt-out of receiving regular notifications from these groups - thereby negating the benefits of compiling a seemingly large membership - or allow regular notifications, but having their effect minimised as students become inured to the constant stream of information. Although education providers deem this information potentially useful, students acknowledge that is not personally targeted and therefore easy and beneficial to mentally and physically filter it out completely.

However, with some modification to the way that social and educational online communities are created and administered, it has been proved that the 'grey area' between

total immersion and total denial of university-led social media can be achieved. This balance will enhance learning, improve social interaction between students in all programmes and years of study, and create healthy, largely unregulated communities aimed at improving the student experience.

With these issues in mind, the research hypothesis addressed in this paper is ' *Despite the general resistance of students towards university-run online communities, social media platforms can be used to improve student engagement, thereby enhancing the student experience* '. The authors' findings, supported by evidence of enhanced student engagement, conclude that huge steps toward optimal implementation of working online communities have been demonstrated.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A variety of data sets were used during this initial phase, including National Student Survey (NSS) - a census which gather opinions from final year students about their courses [9] - response rates, along with student engagement with co-curricular activities - in particular mooting and War of Words (WoW), as well as the number of students graduating with either certificate or diploma in professional development. Based on these data sets, and their 'milestone' timings / occurrences throughout the academic year, the following route was pursued to the conclusions reached, after having observed student activity in the academic years 2013-14 and 2014-15:

· Number of students enrolled on co-curricular courses, compared to other Schools;

· Number of students awarded diplomas/certificates, compared to other Schools;

· NSS returns, measures student engagement levels, end of year

Our findings in support of the research hypothesis above and based upon the data derived from these milestones can be found in the conclusion subsection at the end of the paper.

UNIVERSITY 'MANAGED LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS' (MLE)

MLEs are university-created and operated online platforms for the organisation of its student's educational needs. [10] Information is placed on these systems which allow a student to access learning materials, submit work and interact with the university and in some cases with each other. The sites are own-branded and strictly regulated by the university, according to the individual University's applicable policies, regulations and Codes of Conduct.

MLEs also have specially designated areas which were designed to allow students a platform for social interaction. These areas normally take the form of discussion threads in module pages, or in central areas such as programme homepages. Students have the capability of creating online profiles with a thumbnail photograph to identify each other, and online activity is open for scrutiny by all members of the relevant student cohort and

staff. There is also a 'private messaging' tool, which allows students to interact with each other, and with staff, away from the public forum.

Therefore, universities have recognised that there is a demand for online social interaction and have attempted to satisfy it through their own systems, though practice is subject to considerable variation across the sector. So why do universities also seek to create online communities on popular non-proprietary social media platforms such as Facebook?

As the use of popular social media sites exploded in 2008 - the year that Facebook reached the 100-million user milestone, [11] universities saw this as an opportunity to promote themselves and their activities in a quick, cost effective (mostly free) and efficient manner to a wide audience. However, in the rather risk-averse climate in which public sector organisations, such as universities, find themselves in, they are reluctant to allow their endorsement in areas of social interaction which do not meet the strict criteria of well-established internal procedures, regulations and Codes of Conduct.

One of the problems is that popular social media platforms are regulated by the sites themselves, and its members' behaviour, while remaining strictly-speaking legal, may not be palatable enough for the university to attach its own brand identity to for fear that it might appear to encourage potentially anti-social behaviour. To address this problem, universities usually request that all users adhere to their policies, regulations and Codes of Conduct if they wish to remain part of the group. To enforce 'acceptable behaviour' universities also seek to monitor and regulate interaction, and ultimately sanctions misusers by excluding them from the online community for breaches of rules.

This has created an impasse - students have generally not accepted their university's invitation to become a member of its MLE social community, and now they find themselves unable to express themselves freely on popular non-proprietary (but university-managed) social media sites, for fear of scrutiny and sanction.

This problem has led to a situation in which students have few opportunities to interact with each other which identifies them as a single university group, unless they create and administer unofficial groups. As a result, these groups are now prevalent, with, at a recent count, at least fifty open groups (to say nothing of the closed, non-member, inaccessible groups) currently available to students of the University at which the authors work. This would be generally acceptable, except for five key issues:

· The groups are mainly used as social cliques, thereby not providing social cohesion between students with competing views and interests;

· The administrators do not regulate behaviour, which means that only the most confident and vocal contributors disseminate thoughts and information;

· The administrators generally allow the groups to be used by themselves, and some other members, to promote specialist or irrelevant products and services, which has the effect of devaluing the group, curtailing normal interaction and keeping membership numbers low;

· The groups tend towards platforms for certain students to cathartically complain to each other without seeking to officially inform the university of their concerns, or to improve their student experience in a proactive way;

· The groups do not tend towards encouraging live interaction between members, preferring instead to create virtual communities [12] .

Of course, students are entitled to use their own social media platforms as they see fit, but this is a wasted opportunity by universities and their students to create collaborative and workable online communities designed to improve student experience across the entire cohort, with a view to encouraging live interaction.

So, the question is how does a university create and administer online communities which encourages live, positive interaction ('student engagement') and that ultimately improves the student experience?

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Student engagement is defined as '… *meaningful student involvement throughout the learning environment, including students participating in curriculum design, classroom management and school building climate* ' [13] . It is also often used to refer as much to student involvement in extra and co-curricular activities (ECCAs) in the campus life of a school/college/university which are thought to have educational benefits as it is to student focus on their curricular studies. [14] Student engagement can be measured through the amount of interaction generated between the university and its students, and between the students themselves. This can take the form of live interaction on university property or at off-campus university-run or endorsed events, or by virtual interaction of university-run or endorsed activities. The common factor is the active involvement of the university. Student engagement is seen as a key factor in improving academic performance, creating viable positive social communities and improving the student experience for the mutual benefit of the student cohort and the university.

Prior to the 2008 '*social media explosion*' [15] , a university could gauge its student engagement levels through involvement in ECCAs - which is the reason why expensive, lively, exuberant fresher events were so important at the beginning of the year to set a high standard of interaction from the outset, encourage new and returning membership of clubs and societies and create social cohesion [16] between students of diverse cultures, academic subjects and years of study.

Another guarantee of social cohesion was through the academic courses themselves. Entire cohort lectures, with student numbers in their hundreds, was commonplace and a means by which students would be assured to meet people outside of their seminar or immediate social groups. For this reason, coffee shops and refectories were generally busy places for social interaction immediately prior and post lecture sessions. However, as it became clear that large group lectures were becoming an anachronism due to their unnecessary use of oversubscribed lecture theatres, inflexible timetabling, and lack of an opportunity for student self-reflection during delivery, the opportunity for students to gather either side of

these scheduled events became less frequent. Equally, since large group lectures target students on specific programmes within their own year group only, the chance for interaction across the entire cohort was non-existent.

One way to encourage whole cohort engagement is through special events, such as public lectures, ECCAs and student parties, such as summer balls. However, unless the events are spaced evenly through the year, and are made attractive to students of all demographic types, such events are mainly populated by small hard-core groups of willingly active participants, not generating the required student engagement to consider that a student 'community' has been created.

An attempt at creating an online community within the School at which the authors work was initially undertaken through a Facebook group, for Mooting. [17] The reason that this platforms was chosen - rather than through the University's MLE - was on the basis of:

· Immediacy of communication - users of the University's managed learning environment are not automatically updated with news and information;

· Profile gathering - users do not have a 'profile' or 'conversation thread' capabilities in the same way as social media platforms, which means that members cannot communicate with each other easily/create new links through, for instance, 'friend requests';

· Continuity - users of the University's MLE are removed from the system after their time at university is complete, which means that alumni are precluded from using the resource to show prospective employers practical examples of involvement/allow new users to communicate with alumni for advice and guidance;

· Freedom of expression - users tend not to communicate freely for fear of an unknown faction of other users who have access to their posts;

· Easy links to other resources - users of the University's MLE do not have access to a single repository of documents, schedules and information in quite as easy a way as with Facebook/blogs;

· Easy links to other media - users do not have the same onscreen access to posted photographs, video thumbnails, open graph meta tags;

· Customisation - the University's MLE is not easily customised, except for using header photographs and logos. On blogsites, each group is customisable to reflect the different identities/aims/'flavour' of the groups;

· Regulation - the University's MLE is complex and sophisticated administration system is not as autonomous and immediate as it is for a group creator. All content must be approved through one or few authorised people, which means that the groups' aims, identities and peaceful interaction among members are never under threat.

While this group has, to date, attracted more than 700 active current members and alumni, who are not discouraged from leaving the group after graduation, the group is only used for

dissemination of information pertaining to the co-curricular course itself, rather than to create a whole cohort social community.

One way to address this challenge was to organise a weekly social event, open to all across the cohort, as a means of providing a rigid structured timeslot (6-8pm on a weekday in an area in the Student Union) within which students could rest assured that regardless of whether or not they missed a single session, that there was a communal activity that was generally available, thereby providing continuity in a social setting. The weekly event was publicised through the university's MLE and university-run social media platforms, but after an academic year (2013-14) of trials, the authors sought to replace the weekly social as it merely attracted the same small group of willingly active participants who would still have populated the School's public lectures, extra-curricular activities and student parties.

WAR OF WORDS

The following academic year (2014-15) saw the creation of a new ECCA, 'War of Words' (WoW), which was initially designed to provide an authentic assessment framework [18] for students to practise advocacy skills in an adversarial (even gladiatorial) atmosphere. In this regard, the authentic nature of WoW not only "requires students to make judgements [and] choices" [19] but also fits with Boud & Falchikov's [20] observation that rather than teaching, assessment should be seen as an act of informing a student's judgement. The course was promoted during the School's induction week, and open to candidates seeking accreditation through the co-curricular professional development diploma/certificate award, (which brings together a range of credit-bearing co-curricular courses focused on authentic assessment - mediation, negotiation, mock trials and advocacy) [21] , or for those only seeking to spectate and/or participate as judges on a formative rather than summative basis. [22]

The means of communication with students was through a Wordpress blog which the students were encouraged to join [23] , rather than through the MLE or university-managed central social media groups. As a means of regulation, students were reminded in a notice that site activity was to adhere to UPRs and Codes of Conduct. Links to the WoW blog were also placed on the 'UH Mooting' Facebook page to promote WoW posts to the 550 Mooting member cohort.

Since WoW is open to non-accredited participants, it was promoted as a partly social activity and timetabled weekly at 6-7pm, at the end of the academic day, with the law social to commence immediately afterwards in the Student Union bar at 7-8pm. This had the effect of not entirely abandoning the weekly social for those who attended the year before, but instead encouraged those who were not previously weekly social attendees, but would be interested in coming to WoW, to attend a social element available to them afterwards.

This 'regimented fun', so-called because it allows social interaction in a way which is university-led, carries an educational (albeit largely uncredited) element and brings students together with a common theme - rather than as an organic social experiment - had an

immediate impact, with student participation at an all-time high. This year, WoW has attracted a growing cohort of up to 500 students, of which only 35 were accredited, and therefore motivated to be there through other than social means, and with a weekly social membership of around 50-60 students per week, of a rapidly fluctuating participant list (rather than the same small week-on-week group).

SELF-REGULATION OF ONLINE GROUPS

What was interesting to note was that online activity on the Facebook and Wordpress groups was largely self-regulated [24] and in line with the University's parallel policies, regulations and Codes of Conduct, without the need for sanction or threats of sanction, in the way that it was needed on the MLE or university-run 'general interest' online groups, and that interaction was more positive and did not suffer from the five key issues raised and listed above. Indeed, as Dabbagh and Kitsantas note, '*learners should not be considered as passive information consumers; rather, they are active co-producers of content*' [25] going on to note that new ways of teaching and learning are being created; '*leading to the emergence of constructs such as…personalization, collaboration, social networking, social presence, user-generated content, the people's Web, and collective wisdom* '.

Taking each issue in turn, the WoW and Mooting online communities addressed each issue in the following ways:

· The 'social cliques' dilemma: Since the groups are university-run but have a largely social element, competing views and interests are encouraged as long as they stay within the parameters of the group's aims. This allows everyone to have an equal voice.

· The 'behaviour regulation' challenge: This is only a problem where (i) exists. It is not necessary here, since everyone's voice is equal. Those wishing to bully or use rhetoric are breaching university policies, regulations and Codes of Conduct and would be sanctioned appropriately - although this has so far not been necessary.

· The 'devaluation problem': Light regulation (mostly at the conception stage of the groups and rarely used now) by administrators to not allow personal promotions outside of the groups' aims has meant that all interaction is relevant and valued. Membership numbers are growing and positive interaction between members is thriving.

· The 'constructive user' challenge: Since the groups are not aimed at general interaction, there has not yet been a problem with this. However, if a problem arose, the relevant student would be dealt with as in (iii), and that student directed towards the proper university channels.

· The 'live interaction' problem: This does not exist, as the groups are set up merely as parasitic on the relevant live interaction group activity.

As can be seen above, where there is a common aim of educational activity, especially if there is a non-accredited participant/spectatorial element, the beneficial by-products of online group activity is that interaction needs little regulation, and student engagement towards social community increases. As Gikas and Grant note, the use of social media creates opportunities for interaction, collaboration, and '*allows students to engage in content creation and communication using social media tools*' [26] . There is, however, an exception to the rule…

THE TEAM SYSTEM

This academic year (2014-15), saw the creation of a brand new online community, set up for the purpose of integrating new students with existing students in an online network of Facebook groups. 1200 students across all years and programmes of study were randomly placed into sixty four groups, of approximately 18 students each, with groups administered by a designated student lead mentor (SLM) who acts a group adviser, content regulator and liaison between group and School.

The aim of the system is to create an online social community which provides a degree of pastoral care. There are no specified 'learning outcomes' or aims, other than that of enhancing social cohesion among the student cohort. This aim was publicised to the students at the start of the academic year, and they were made aware that the system was set up for this general benefit. Throughout the year, SLMs post interesting discussion topics, general advice and links to beneficial resources, relating to general law-specific academic pursuits.

The system is also used to promote the School's ECCAs, which is likely to be the reason why weekly attendance at WoW, Mooting along with other ECCAs is high with membershop varying on a weekly basis.

Therefore, the exception to the rule is that where there is a pastoral, but non-specified benefit and it is student-run (albeit within the Code of Conduct framework) the success of the online community is not dependent on regimentation of a single activity, such as WoW or Mooting, as long as the regimentation is created through the formation of the system itself.

In fact, this coming academic year (2015-16) it is intended that the Team System is made even more regimented and sophisticated by introducing tiered involvement from Student Committee Mentors (SCMs) and Student Team Mentors (STMs) below the existing SLM tier. This should ensure even greater community interaction and awareness of the pastoral system in place.

LINKS BETWEEN 'STUDENT ENGAGEMENT' AND 'IMPROVED STUDENT EXPERIENCE'

The Key Performance Indicator (KPI) for student experience is the National Student Survey (NSS), a survey conducted externally to final year undergraduate students and recognised as the gauge for the 'Student Satisfaction' element of the various national university rankings systems. Student engagement is therefore a key factor in ensuring that students take the survey, for without engagement, the returns are low and, regardless of the substantive results provided from those students who do participate in the survey, a low overall return is considered as a negative.

During the 2014/15 academic year, the School of Law promoted NSS participation in two ways: (i) by organising a special NSS event 'The Chilli Cook-off', which allows staff and students a chance to compete in a cooking event, with the non-cooking staff and students as judges; and (ii) by promoting the event through the Team System Facebook groups. The School managed to reach two-thirds of its return target by the end of this single event - a feat unparalleled throughout the university.

ANALYSIS

After having considered the academic year 'milestones' and correlated datasets:

· Number of students enrolled on co-curricular courses, compared to other Schools;

· Number of students awarded diplomas/certificates, compared to other Schools;

· NSS returns, measures student engagement levels, end of year;

We reach the following conclusions:

Mooting was taken as the baseline for student engagement with co-curricular activities, due to its long standing presence both within the School and legal education. [27] This activity has run on an annual basis for almost twenty years, as well as in a variety of forms. In its earliest format, this was a non-credit bearing extracurricular activity that attracted an annual enrolment of 60 students (The following numbers were recorded: 2010 - 58 students, 2011 - 67 students, 2012 - 51 students). However, by mid-November, this number had usually dwindled to less than 20 students. [28]

In 2013, the decision was made to amend the format, establishing mooting as a credit-bearing co-curricular course, though students would only achieve the credits if they engaged in a series of activities, including a round-robin mooting competition during Semester A, followed by a knock-out competition throughout Semester B culminating in an Easter final. Significantly though, to support this change in focus, the School made significant use of a Facebook page for students to interact specifically about mooting, and supported this further via the creation of a WordPress blog, featuring videos of mooting

teams before and after their competitions. In 2013, this resulted in 346 students enrolling on the mooting course. Furthermore, of these, 128 students progressed on to the knock-out phase of the internal competition. Significantly though, many of those who had participated during the Semester A round-robin competition continued to attend so as to support friends and/or observe which teams progressed through to the final. In 2014, this increase in both the engagement and retention of students with the course was repeated, with 285 students formally enrolling on the course in Semester A and, of these, 126 progressed on to the knock-out phase.

With regards to the first cohort of students graduating under the new credit-bearing co-curricular programme, 6 have achieved a diploma in professional development (requiring at least 60 credits) and a further 43 have secured a certificate in professional development (requiring at least 30 credits). When it is noted that the maximum number of credits that a student may study, over and above their normal diet of study on the undergraduate degree, is 30 credits per year, the level of engagement in other co-curricular activities (i.e. beyond that of mooting), and across the past two academic years, becomes clear. This is something which the authors intend to map and track across a five year period so as to better understand student engagement.

Turning to the National Student Survey (NSS), a similar upward trajectory has been seen over the past three years. In 2013, the School managed to achieve a 67.03% return rate for final year students completing the NSS. In 2014, the School's return rate had increased to 72.64%, which was 1.42% higher than the University average and the fourth highest response rate amongst the ten Schools. By 2015, the response rate had risen yet again to that of 75.64%, which was 2.81% higher than the University average and the third highest amongst the ten academic Schools. It is also worth noting that over this three year period, results specifically relating to the developmental opportunities provided by the School rose consistently from 80% in 2012 to that of 82% in 2013 and 84% in 2014. It is anticipated that this trend will continue with the 2015 results which, at the time of writing, are not available.

Whilst there is considerable mileage in extending this analysis across a five year period so as to better understand student engagement and the longer term impact of popular social media platforms, there is a clear link to be made between the introduction of social media alongside the School's co-curricular programme which, in turn, has had a positive impact on student engagement with, and completion of, credit-bearing co-curricular activities. This has been mirrored by increased engagement with student surveys during the middle, as well as at the end, of the academic year. One aspect, which the authors [29] have continued to explore further alongside these data sets is the performance of students who use social media to a greater or lesser extent and their experiences both as part of the formal curriculum as well as on the School's co-curricular programme.

CONCLUSION

Social media platforms are an invaluable resource to increase student engagement and augment traditional learning and teaching methods in higher education. The reluctance for universities to allow students an unregulated voice to air views and interact with each other has meant that use of social media has been largely restricted to a sterilised version of what is freely available to students if left to their own devices.

Managed learning environments (MLEs), once thought of as the solution to online community interaction, simply cannot keep up with the technological advances, ubiquitousness and user-friendly nature of the 'big four': Facebook, Twitter, Google and Youtube. Therefore, it is in the higher education institutions interests to ensure that students' online activity on these platforms is optimised.

As the authors have demonstrated, the fears that students will misbehave or otherwise negatively impact the reputation of their institution through their interaction, are unfounded. On the contrary, if wide parameters are set, the communities are largely self - regulating and provide an unparalleled opportunity to increase positive social engagement among the student cohort.

[1] Senior lecturer at the University of Hertfordshire School of Law.

[2] Dean of the University of Hertfordshire School of Law.

[3] Blaschke, L.M. (2014) 'Using social media to engage and develop the online learner in self-determined learning' Research in Learning Technology 2014, 22: 21635

[4] Dixson, M. (2010) 'Creating effective student engagement in online courses: What do students find engaging?' Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, Vol. 10, No. 2, pp. 1 - 13

[5] Tess, P. (2013) 'The role of social media in higher education classes (real and virtual) - A literature review' Computers in Human Behaviour 29(5), p60

[6] Roblyer, M. et al (2010) 'Findings on Facebook in higher education: A comparison of college faculty and student uses and perceptions of social networking sites', The Internet and Higher Education, 13(3), p135

[7] Dunn, L. (2013) 'Teaching in higher education: can social media enhance the learning experience?' 6th Annual University of Glasgow Learning and Teaching Conference, Glasgow, UK

[8] Correa, T. et al (2010) 'Who interacts on the Web?: The intersection of user's personality and social media use', Computers in Human Behaviour 26(2), p248

[9] http://www.thestudentsurvey.com/about.php

[10] Craig, E.M, (2007),"Changing paradigms: managed learning environments and Web 2.0", Campus-Wide Information Systems, Vol. 24 Iss 3 pp. 152 - 161

[11] Facebook, available at: https://www.facebook.com/notes/facebook/our-first-100-million/28111272130

[12] Information gathered from internal School of Law and central University of Hertfordshire Marketing and Communications dept. analytic data.

[13] Fletcher, A. (2005), 'Guide to Students as Partners in School Change', Olympia, WA: SoundOut, p137

[14] Markwell, D (2007), 'A large and liberal education': higher education for the 21st century, Melbourne', Australian Scholarly Publishing & Trinity College, University of Melbourne

[15] Mangold, W G & Faulds, D J, (2009) 'Social media: The new hybrid element of the promotion mix' Business Horizons Vol. 52(4), pp357-365

[16] Forrest, R & Kearns, A (2001), 'Social Cohesion, Social Capital and the Neighbourhood' [2001] Urban Studies, Vol. 38(12), pp2125 - 2143

[17] https://www.facebook.com/groups/153137741559742

[18] Hart, C. et al - (2011) 'The real deal: using authentic assessment to promote student engagement in the first and second years of a regional law program', Legal Education Review, 21 (1)

[19] Burton, K. (2011) 'A framework for determining the authenticity of assessment tasks: applied to an example in law', Journal of Learning Design, Vol. 4(2), p24

[20] Boud, D. & Falchikov, N. (2007) 'Rethinking assessment in higher education: Learning for the longer term', New York: Routledge

[21] Kam, L. et al (2012), 'Get Real! A Case Study of Authentic Learning Activities in Legal Education', Murdoch University Law Review 19(2)

[22] Sadler, R. (1989) 'Formative Assessment and the Design of Educational Systems', Instructional Science 8

[23] https://uhwarofwords.wordpress.com

[24] Shea & Bidjerano, 2010)

[25] Dabbagh, N. and Kitsantas, A. (2012) 'Personal Learning Environments, social media, and self-regulated learning: A natural formula for connecting formal and informal learning', The Internet and Higher Education 15(1), p2

[26] Gikas, J. and Grant, M. (2013) 'Mobile computing devices in higher education: Student perspectives on learning with cellphones, smartphones and social media', The Internet and Higher Education 19, p18

[27] Keys, M. & Whincop, M. (1997) 'The moot reconceived: some theory and evidence on legal skills', Legal Education Review 8(1)

[28] Precise numbers for 2010 through to 2012 are not available for these time periods

[29] Berger, D & Wild, C. (2015) 'Using authentic assessment techniques in extra and co-curricular activities (ECCAs) to improve teaching standards on academic law programmes', Journal of Commonwealth Law & Legal Education