

**„Go4job – e Skills Project Days & More –  
Developing Competences for High-Performance Workplaces“**

# Digital media for vocational education

## An Introduction to Facebook

### 1.1 Facebook & Social Networking

Facebook is a social networking website where people can meet and interact online. Facebook users can communicate about common interests, share photos, music and videos, make new friends and generally socialise online. It is one of a new generation of social networking tools that includes YouTube for sharing videos, Flickr for sharing photos, Blogger for maintaining an interactive online diary, and many others. Collectively they are referred to as Web 2.0 applications and the other modules in this series will describe a number of them and how they can be used in education to enhance the learner experience. Social networking sites such as these, together with other freely available online services such as Google for finding information, Skype for online voice communications, e-Bay for online buying and selling, have transformed the way society operates both socially and at work over the last decade. There is every reason to assume that the services provided will continue to expand and add value, and that education can benefit from this developing resource.

Facebook is the first of the social networking sites that will be examined in this series of modules. This introduction will outline what it offers, how it works and how you sign up to become part of the Facebook community. Later in the module you will see how it has been used in education and will reflect on how it could add benefit to the learner experience in your area of vocational education and training.

The following document from [Indometric](#) provides an excellent overview for those new to Facebook:

Having been introduced to Facebook, it is now time to set up your own Facebook account so you can explore the application in more detail. If you already have a Facebook account you can skip this activity, but it is recommended that you quickly read the section anyway to remind yourself of the process.

### 1.2 Setting up a Facebook account

Follow these simple steps to create your new Facebook account. Once you have an account you'll be able to post onto your own 'Wall', join 'Groups' and search for other Facebook users to invite as 'Friends'.

If you are going to use Facebook for teaching, then all of your students will also need to sign up for a Facebook account in the same way. In later sessions in this module you will find out how to set up Facebook groups and pages for your course.

- First open a new window or tab within your Internet Browser.
- Enter the web address [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com) and the following

webpage should appear:

Once the Facebook page has loaded, complete the **Sign Up** section on the right of the screen.

With most online forms you are required to enter a series of characters as displayed within an image. This is to prevent automated form filling.

Enter the words in the text box and then click **Sign Up**.

Facebook will try and match you with range of friends, some maybe people who have tried to find you on Facebook even before you signed up and some may be totally random. You will probably wish to select 'Skip this step'.

The third step then invites you to fill out your profile. This is the information that people will see about you when they look at your Facebook profile. It can include personal details, photos, school and work details and other information. Leave any section blank if you are uncomfortable with sharing such information (click 'Skip this section' if you don't want any details made available).

When you have completed your profile entry, click **Save & Continue**. Your account is now set up and all that's left to do is activate your details by clicking the link in your email.

In order to verify that your identity is genuine, Facebook will have sent you an email with a link to confirm your email address. Open your email software and locate the email entitled **Just one more step to get started on Facebook** and click on the link.

That's it! Your Facebook account is now set up and live. You will now see your home Facebook.

Now that you have set up your Facebook account it is important that you consider the issues of privacy and security in the use of such social networking sites. The following section covers this issue.

### 1.3 Gathering Information on Facebook: Organisations

It is not just people who use Facebook to reach new audiences. BMW, Fiat, the European Parliament, Santander and many other organisations all use Facebook as a marketing and information sharing tool. Using Facebook within Business, Economics or Law classes could bring new and exciting resources to the sessions that have been published that same day! A good example is the BBC Facebook page. You can access the BBC World News Facebook page [here](#).

### 1.4 Protecting yourself

Now you have created an account on Facebook it would be a good idea to change the **Privacy Settings**. When using Facebook for communications with a group of learners you will want to restrict who can see the content. Content that can be viewed by **Everyone** is visible to anybody with a Facebook account. Content that can be viewed by **Friends** can only be viewed by people whom you have added to your list of **Friends**. Remember that in this situation the term **Friends** will be the connection between you and your students.

To view or change your settings select **Privacy Settings**

- Click **Account** from the top right of the webpage
- Select **Privacy Settings** from the drop down menu

The following webpage should now be visible. Notice how by default some settings are available to **Everyone**.

- In order to change your settings click on **Customise settings**

To the right of each property you will see a drop down menu which will allow you to make changes.

- Click on the dropdown to the right of **Posts by me**
- Select **Friends Only** (ie your students)
- Click on the dropdown to the right of **Family**
- Select **Custom**
- From the **These people** dropdown select **Only Me**

As you scroll down think carefully about the content and data Facebook currently holds and which will hold in the future and make changes accordingly. Below are a series of recommended settings.

- Click **Back to Privacy** once you have finished. You should now notice that your summary looks like that below, rather than the defaults you had originally. You can return and make further changes at any time.

Having set up your account and decided on your privacy settings, it is now time to consider how you can use Facebook to gather information about people and organisations.

## 1.5 Gathering Information on Facebook

When people and organisations set up Facebook pages they provide a lot of information about themselves and their activities. When those people are important figures in politics, entertainment or industry, then that information can be very useful in an educational context.

### 1. Information about people:

Many famous people have Facebook pages and a lot of information can be found by searching for them using the Facebook Search facility.

Below is an example of Angela Merkel's Facebook page. With all Pages in Facebook you can choose the filter the information displayed. Below the tabs you should notice 'Angela Merkel + Others', 'Angela Merkel' and 'Just Others'. These three views allow you to view comments left by fellow Facebook users. You could encourage your own learners to comment on Angela's posts however your learners should be aware that comment made by other Facebook may be of personal opinion rather than fact.

You can access Angela Merkel's Facebook page [here](#).

Try searching for other people by entering their names in the search box.

### 2. Information about organisations:

It is not just people who use Facebook to reach new audiences. BMW, Fiat, the European Parliament, Santander and many other organisations all use Facebook as a marketing and information sharing tool. Using Facebook within Business, Economics or Law classes could bring new and exciting resources to the sessions that have been published that same day! A good example is the BBC Facebook page which you can access marketing and information sharing tool. Using Facebook within Business, Economics or Law classes could bring new and exciting resources to the sessions that have been published that same day! A good example is the BBC Facebook page which you can access marketing and information sharing tool. Using Facebook within Business, Economics or Law classes could bring new and exciting resources to the sessions that have been published that same day! A good example is the BBC Facebook page which you can access Again, try searching for information about organisations by entering their name in the Search box.

Facebook is just one of several online information sources that are available through the use of web 2.0 tools. It clearly has value in education and the use of Facebook for this purpose is explored in the next section.

## Using Facebook in Teaching and Learning

### 2.1 Using Facebook in the Classroom

As the use of Facebook has grown in popularity as a social networking site, teachers have been considering how it could be used in an educational context to improve the learning experience of their students. It is clear that an online site designed for people with similar interests to communicate and collaborate would have great potential for group work, collaborative assignments and other class-based activities.

This has been recognised by the Facebook organisation itself which has a Facebook site dedicated to education applications that shares the experiences of teachers and provides examples of effective practice. Have a look at the site [here](#).

This website is a good introduction to the use of Facebook in education. Later in the module you will learn more about its use, particularly in Vocational Education & Training. What do you think of the views expressed here? Have you any experience in the use of such collaborative tools for supporting learners? At the end of the session you will be invited to share your thoughts on the module discussion forum. There are a number of other resources that provide advice on effective practice in the use of Facebook in education and these include 'A Teacher's Guide to Using Facebook' and 'Facebook Best Practice in Education'. The second document refers to the use of Facebook Pages when preparing for educational use and this is the subject of the next session.

In the previous session you saw how Facebook could be used to gather useful educationally relevant information. How do you know the information is valid however? The next session covers that issue.

### 2.2 Gathering Information: Is it fake?

So far you have been introduced to a small selection of Facebook pages and groups which are genuine. As you start to search you should notice that for every keyword you use a range of pages and groups appear. This is no different to Google.

If you wanted to find information on Telefonica, the following could appear: How do you know which ones are genuine? Maybe they all are? Maybe someone is a fan and set up a page out of support? In many cases the result with the greatest number of fans is authentic. In order to use the content within a teaching and learning environment you must ensure the content is accurate.

Once within a Page you may notice some descriptive text. In the example above you'll notice that there is a block of text below the image. This is a description which is not written by Facebook.

The example above is a Facebook Page entitled JK Rowling. There is nothing to indicate that this is genuine. There are no posts by JK Rowling and the text at the top "Our goal..." suggests it has been set up by a fan. For more information on this subject Lauren Gerber has written an interesting article entitled Face Profiles on Fakebook/Facebook which you can find For more information on this subject Lauren Gerber has written an interesting article entitled Face Profiles on Fakebook/Facebook which you can find For more information on this subject Lauren Gerber has written an interesting article entitled Face Profiles on Fakebook/Facebook which you can find If Facebook is to be used as a teaching and learning tool, then your students will need to have access to the account you have set up for the purpose. The next section shows how this is organised.

### 2.3 Adding Students

Having set up a Facebook account for teaching purposes you will need to ensure that all your students can access it. To do this they will all need to set up their own Facebook accounts (if they haven't already got one) and will use the same procedure outlined in

Session 1 to do this. You will then be able to invite them as 'Friends' of the Facebook page. Using the Search box at the top of the page you can type the name of your students one by one. By default Facebook will display results based on people you have already become friends with. With the example below there are likely to be 1000's of users called Huw Smith globally. Facebook has displayed one initially who is already one of the user's Facebook Friends. To view more possible Huw Smith's you can click on '**See More Results for Huw Smith**'.

Depending on the privacy setting applied by the student you are looking for you may (or may not) see a photograph to help confirm the correct person. Facebook will also display limited geographical information which can aid the searching process.

Once you have located your student click **Add as Friend** and await their confirmation. By clicking on **Profile** (at the top of the screen) you will be able to see your Profile as displayed to others. On the left side of the screen should be a list of your confirmed Facebook Friends. This introduction to the use of Facebook in education will now conclude with a summary and an invitation for you to post your views on the discussion forum.

## Collaboration with Facebook Pages

### 3.1 Using Facebook Pages in Education

This resource begins with two YouTube videos giving examples of the use of Facebook Pages in Teaching. They both are from schools but they involve reflective student practice and class management that could equally apply in a vocational learning course.

The first video demonstrates how Facebook Pages (sometimes referred to as fan pages) can be used within history lessons. In this example the students create pages as if they were the chosen historical figure.

- [Using Facebook to teach](#)

The second video demonstrates how Facebook Pages can be used to issue assignment information, record lessons and host lesson resources.

- [Facebook as a Teaching Tool](#)

A good place to start when considering designing a Facebook Page for your courses is the [A good place to start when considering designing a Facebook Page for your courses](#) is the [A good place to start when considering designing a Facebook Page for your courses](#) is the

### 3.2 Creating a Facebook Page

Facebook has published a guide on how to create a Facebook Page and populate it with content. You can download it [here](#).

It is a very detailed guide and for the purposes of this session you may only wish to scan through it to see the topics it covers and to appreciate how useful it will be as a reference source when you begin to construct your own pages. It is suggested that you read pages 1-5 initially.

Having seen how to create Facebook pages and use them in an educational context, you can now practice creating your own pages in the Skills resources.

### 3.3 Creating a Page

This exercise will take you through the sequence of creating a Facebook Page. The actions involved will be very similar to those described in the Facebook Pages Manual, so when you go back to that for detailed advice, the format will be familiar.

To create a Page, you need to be logged into your Facebook account. When logged in, enter the following address in the browser address bar: <http://www.facebook.com/page>.

The following window will appear. It invites you to identify the type of organisation or purpose of your page: Click on 'Company, Organisation or Institution'. A drop-down list of

types of organisation will then be offered and for this exercise select 'Education' and give it an appropriate name:

Having agreed to the Facebook Pages Terms and clicked on 'Get Started', the basic page will appear which invites you to upload a photo and begin to make the page known to friends and others on the web:

You will see that the layout is the same as for your own individual Facebook page. The main active area is the Wall and clicking on that button to the left of the screen displays all recent postings and comments:

You now have an empty Facebook Page that you can now begin to populate with content. The processes for doing that are covered in the next section.

### 3.4 Customising your Page

Now that you have created your Facebook Page you can customise the appearance and settings and add content. Content is added by posting messages, as well as adding photos, videos and links to relevant websites. To post a message just type in the 'Write something' window. To upload photos or videos, click on the icons and browse your computer to identify the file to upload. Your Facebook Page can be used as a general noticeboard for your course where all your students, when linked as 'Fans' of your page, can be informed of any updates or new resources whenever you add them to the Page. It can also be used to advertise your course to the wider community.

The settings for your Facebook Page are managed by clicking on the 'Edit Page' icon on the top left of the page. This opens a window with a range of options:

As well as allowing control of who can see and add content to the page, it also provides information about who is accessing the page (the 'Insights' function), which is useful when using it for teaching with groups of students, as well as using it for advertising the course. You are now invited to experiment with your Facebook Page; populating it with content, posting messages, inviting friends to be 'Fans' of your page and generally forming an opinion about how useful it might be in your teaching. You will probably find the Facebook Pages Manual a useful resource while doing this. In the final part of this session you will be invited to share your experience and opinions in the discussion forum.

## Facebook in Vocational Education and Training

### 5.1 Facebook VET Pages

These pages are presented as sources of information for you to explore how Facebook is being used by the educational community to communicate and share good practice. There are many Facebook pages that can provide information about VET and related issues and the following page is a good starting point:

You can access this resource [here](#).

This page is promoting new approaches for the delivery of vocational education across Europe using, in particular, online learning. It is managed by the [European Foundation for Quality in e-Learning](#) and provides links to other Facebook pages that also concern VET online such as the following about Adult Learning (again, click to open in a new window): You can access this resource [here](#).

From these pages you will be able to explore Facebook pages further as, with each choice, Facebook offers similar pages to view in the navigation window on the left of the page. It is suggested that you now use the links above to explore other Facebook pages related to VET and to judge the value of Facebook as a way to connect with others in the online community of practice.

This session concludes the Facebook module. You have been shown the functionality of

Facebook, have set up a Facebook account and have had the opportunity of exploring its value in the support of online learners. You are now invited to share your experience and views in the concluding discussion. uploaded and displayed, but there is the option of linking to videos on YouTube or photos on Flickr through Facebook Apps if that is preferred. The whole purpose of these modules is to introduce you to the range of web 2.0 options available for the support of vocational education and training and to show how they can be combined in a flexible way to suit the intended learners. When you consider the use of Facebook in this context, you should also be considering how it might fit with other web 2.0 functionality in the design of your online learning environment.

Having completed the module and considered these issues, you are now invited to share your views and experience on the discussion forum. What do you think of the use of Facebook in your area of vocational education and training? Could it be used as an independent web 2.0 application as additional support for classroom training? What are your thoughts on its use for online distance learners?