



THE PATH TO **ONLINE** LEARNING COMMUNITIES

THE BUILDING BLOCKS



Socio-cultural context



Learning context



Institutional context

THE SUPPORTING BLOCKS



Engagement

Co-creation,
Co-learning



Imagination

Reflective &
critical learning



Alignment

Working towards
shared goals,
standards and
community

THE BLOCKS IN ACTION



- Offer students an opportunity to reflect on their experiences
- Provide useful external resources, such as open educational material and TED Talks
- Involve students in extracurricular activities which reward their learning in the course
- Provide students with opportunities to practice transferable skills that they are likely to encounter in the course, such as teamworking
- Use specific tools and technologies that will be used in the course



- Get students to expand on some of the basic rules/ behaviours you set - like creating their own rules
- Encourage independent research
- Plan online social activities in dedicated online area
- Link them indirectly to your course flow
- Encourage co-creation through Wikis, Padlet, Zotero etc.
- Create discussion groups on topics related to course
- Supplement these with fun activities



- Use online social introductory forum activities in a visual form, for example place / self-photos of accomplishments, hobbies, expectations, previous learning experiences
- Introduce tools to aggregate the visual and textual elements of the messages
- Try incorporating mechanisms that focus on mapping students' digital competencies and learning styles. Make this a larger part of the course and online experience rather than preset it as disconnected skills sets

THE MEMBERSHIP BLOCKS



Joint enterprise

A collective understanding of what the community is about, its purpose



Mutual engagement

Interacting and establishing norms, expectations, and relationships



Shared repertoire

Using communal resources such as language and artifact tools



This infographic was created in collaboration with Dr Konstantina Martzoukou, Teaching Excellence Fellow, Robert Gordon University, UK

References:

- Wenger, E. (1998). Communities of Practice: Learning, meaning and identity, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Wenger, E. (2010). Communities of practice and social learning systems: The career of a concept. In C. Blackmore (Ed.), Social Learning Systems and Communities of Practice (pp. 179-198). London: Springer. doi:10.1007/978-1-84996-133-2