

# 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**

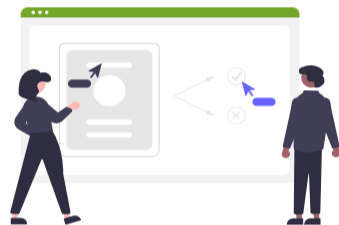
Reflective &  
critical learning



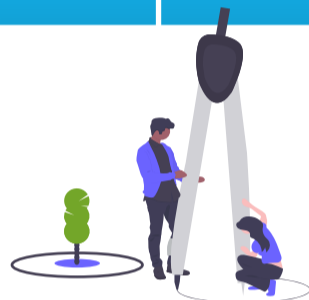
**Alignment**

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