PebblePad® Planning Meetings Australia

Would you like to see where we’re up to with the development of PP³? Would you like to help influence some of the decisions we’ve yet to make? Would you like the earliest possible indication of what the move to PP³ will entail? If the answer to any of those questions is ‘yes’ then you are in luck.

We will be running a series of user group meetings in March and April where you are invited to discuss the current development of PebblePad® and how it can respond to your personal, professional and institutional needs.

The new homepage or dashboard will be shown along with the very funky template builder, which is replacing the current form and profile builders. Templates can be built by any user and can be shared with any other PebblePad user, wherever they are, through the template library. In future versions profiles will be something very different – they’ll become part of PebbleWorld, and whether webfolios remain is up to you!

See, discuss, suggest and prepare by booking a place at one of the meetings in Perth, Adelaide, Melbourne, Wagga Wagga, Sydney.

Book Now: http://www.pebblepad.co.uk/usergroup_AU_11.asp

Turnitin Integration

Back in 2008 we developed a trial Turnitin plugin for PebblePad to allow both students and staff to check their PebblePad based work in the worlds’ most popular plagiarism detection software. Since its limited release a number of institutions have installed the plugin and given us feedback, which we have used to help develop a version that is due to be released in July 2011. Your institution will need to have a licence for Turnitin so an administrator can set things up. Once installed the access to Turnitin is managed via Gateways. Staff can be given access to submit work to Turnitin and view the reports generated.

The first part of the reporting process displays a list of all the items submitted with their originality rating displayed and a graphical representation of the plagiarism risk. The really clever part is that the system scans all appropriate asset types that are part of the submitted work. So if a Webfolio is submitted with a range of assets attached all the linked items are also checked. Once the check is complete you can view the originality report and access Turnitin features such as GradeMark to give students feedback on their work.

Importantly there is an option to allow students to submit their work and get an originality report of the work they have submitted to a gateway. We believe this is an important option to support plagiarism awareness raising with students.

Blackboard & Moodle Building Blocks

We’ve had a Moodle building block available for a while now and with the release of Moodle 2.0 we have been working on a new version for organisations upgrading. This will soon be ready to be released and provides similar facilities as the previous version such as single sign on, creating assets and uploading files straight into PebblePad from Moodle. The next step will be to build a standards based version that uses the emerging IMS LTI (Learning Tools Interoperability) standard. As we are involved in the JISC funded CoLTc project using LTI. The intention is to release an update to PebblePad in July which introduces LTI support. This means that we can easily develop plugins to link PebblePad to a range of other learning tools without needing further PebblePad updates.

Alongside the Moodle Development we are also creating a new Blackboard Learn 9.1 building block. Again this is LTI based and allows single sign on from Blackboard, reporting of PebblePad activity within the block as well as asset creation directly from within Blackboard. Development is ongoing and we expect there to be more functionality before the summer release. Both blocks are being enhanced at the moment but can be trialed, so if you are interested in testing out either of these building blocks feel free to get in touch via our support team at support@pebblepad.com, alternatively visit the PebblePad stands at either the Blackboard Conference in Leeds (11th-13th April) or see the Moodle 2.0 integration being presented at the Moodle-Moot on the 18th & 19th April in London.

http://www.pebblepad.co.uk/moodle

Online Seminars

In previous issues of Paddling Around we promoted a series of online seminars to showcase the different aspects of PebblePad, whilst also providing the opportunity for people to learn something new. We have been delighted with the attendance to these seminars and plan to run more in the future due to the feedback we’ve received being so positive. All the recordings are available online and are linked below. Register online to receive a reminder of events and seminar overviews and please pass this through your internal networks, this is a real opportunity for us to reach as wide a population of PebblePad users as possible.

http://www.pebblepad.co.uk/webinar.signup.asp

All times 12:00 - 13:00 GMT

- Getting Started with PebblePad
- Introduction to Gateways
- Managing Assessment on Gateways
- Advanced Gateway Functionality
  - Effective Form Building – 23 March
  - Effective Profile Building – 6 April
  - Open Community Forum – 13 April
Julie Hughes Oz Tour

Many commented on how much their eyes were opened about the possibilities of PP so I think that is such a good outcome for us.

Deborah Murdoch, Educational Technologist, Charles Sturt University

In February, Julie Hughes, Head of Compulsory Education, University of Wolverhampton, and a PebblePad guru, spent 7-days at six different universities in a whirlwind two-week visit to Australia. Julie presented and ran workshops in Tasmania, Melbourne, Adelaide, Wagga Wagga, and Sydney. The focus of Julie’s sessions was on the integration of PebblePad into curriculum and strategies for facilitating effective school-wide implementation. Conversations about pedagogy, the sharing of successes (and disasters), and planning for the next steps left participants inspired, with a renewed enthusiasm for PebblePad and personal learning.

The feedback from colleagues was overwhelmingly positive. Lots of interest in PP has been generated as a result, and more importantly, we all learnt a lot from Julie’s experience.

Ruth Weeks, Educational Designer, Sydney University

Pebblegogy takes shape

By way of a reminder Pebblegogy is the name we light-heartedly gave to the book we are writing about supporting learners and learning using PebblePad. The more we use the term the more we like it because it makes a statement that there is a particular way of working in PebblePad and a particular pedagogy the system tends towards. However, we have no idea how you might feel about the word so feel free to let us know at pebblegogy@pebblepad.co.uk. The great news is that the book is taking shape nicely. There are five introductory chapters and then 12 sections of activities – about 40 activities in all – which are designed to help you support learners and learning.

Thank-you to all those people who contributed activities to the book, not all will have made it in their original guise because of overlaps, but every single activity has been drawn upon in some way or other to enable us to provide you with a really comprehensive handbook of activities and designs that can be customised to suit different learning contexts.

The book will be out in June. More to follow in the next newsletter.

Portfolio Interoperability

We’ve been working with JISC CETIS in the UK and the AFLN in Australia to keep eportfolio interoperability on the development agenda. One of the questions we keep getting asked is what evidence exists of students coming to university with existing eportfolios, or leaving and wanting to reuse their assets in systems provided beyond the institution. This has been a really tricky question to answer and so we’re turning to you to ask if you know of any such examples. If you do, please drop an email with brief details to shane@pebblepad.co.uk

New Enterprise Customers

As PebblePad use continues to grow in Australia we are delighted to announce two new enterprise licence holders. Both La Trobe University in Melbourne and Flinders University in Adelaide have recently signed enterprise licence agreements for 3 and 5 years respectively. It is of interest to note that La Trobe have also moved to Moodle 2.0 from Blackboard in 2011, and Flinders will be making the same move in 2012, and both have opted for PebblePad as their preferred Personal Learning/ePortfolio solution.

Making the case

We know from experience that both prospective and existing customers often have to justify the ‘costs’ of PebblePad – sadly sometimes without any thought to the benefits. Over the last few months Sarah Chesney (who led the Flourish Project, and is now working as an independent consultant) has been interviewing many of you and gathering information for making the case for PebblePad. Thank you to everyone who has contributed their time, knowledge and institutional information.

Sarah has been examining the actual costs of paper portfolios; the relative costs of open source and the unique affordances (valued by you and your users) of a tool like PebblePad. These ‘making the case’ documents will soon be made available on our website and will be featured in the next Paddling Around.

Conferences / Events


Online Meetings

If you would like to arrange a meeting, see a demo or just have a chat about PebblePad feel free to get in touch (enquiries@pebblelearning.co.uk) and we’ll be delighted to organise an online meeting, showcasing PebblePad.

Contact us

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