BLOGS

BLOG SUPPORT – GENERAL

WHAT IS A BLOG?

A blog is a website where a writer (or writers) posts commentary, links, images and other media. It is arranged in reverse chronological order (most recent at the top) and ideally should be updated frequently. Most blogs also include a comment facility that allows readers to post their comments on individual pieces written for the blog. The effect of this is to create a dialogue and conversation around topics of common interest. Most public blogs also allow sharing and 'liking' by the common social-media platforms, and so the conversation may take place elsewhere in social media, rather than on the blog.

WHAT IS A UOW BLOG?

UOW Blogs are blogs for our staff and students using a specialised version of Wordpress. Wordpress powers one in five commercial websites worldwide and is fast becoming an essential skill for many employees across all industries and disciplines.

Edublogs is currently the largest educational blogging service in the world and has managed 2,759,434 blogs since its inception in 2005. Edublogs is able to provide UOW Blogs with an exceptional blogging platform that can cater to a range of complex and extensive needs.

WHO CAN REQUEST A BLOG?

Only a staff member of UOW can be a Blog Administrator to manage or run a UOW blog, however HDR research students can manage a blog if their supervisor requests this on their behalf. The idea is that any legitimate teaching, learning or research partners can be enrolled to contribute to your blog. Blogs are about encouraging communities of common practice or interest. Some are about keeping a small group together for the purposes of completing a specific project. Others are used to encourage discussion around a broader set of related topics - such as Health and Medical research, or Language and Literacy in education. Blogs are often password protected (using your regular UOW login details) but they can also be open to the public if required. Each blog will typically have a small group of people who actively author posts, and a larger group who may read and sometimes comment. You can have your blog settings such that all posts and comments are moderated before publication - which is useful if your blog is open to all to read.

WHAT IS THE BLOG USED FOR?

UOW Wordpress Blogs can be used for a range of purposes. UOW Blogs are predominantly used for:

1. Subjects – whereby students contribute to a blog to demonstrate and develop an understanding of subject content in both a public and/or private manner

2. Research – showcase the ongoing work of research centres and individuals within a particular field

3. Projects – showcase the work of projects currently developing within UOW and the broader community

4. Collaborative Projects – private working space for university staff and their research counterparts at external organisations.

5. Skills development – where students and staff need to practice using the real-world tools of digital publishing, and gain skills in the linkages between blogs and other forms of social media, perhaps as part of an understanding of their digital profile and as part of increasing their digital literacies.
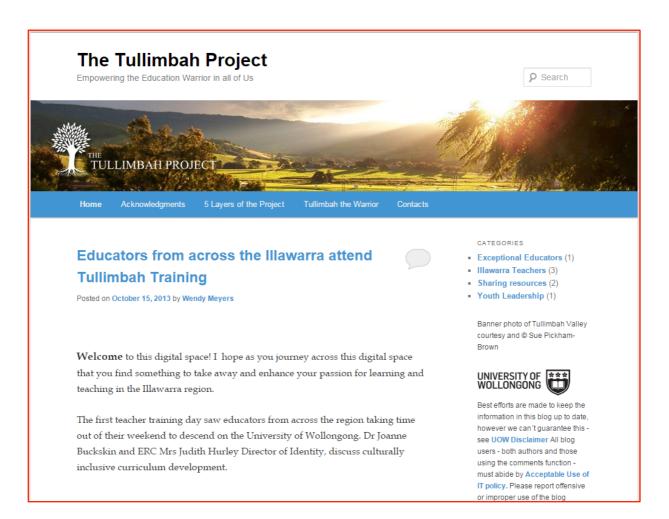
WHAT IS THE BLOG NOT USED FOR?

A blog is not suitable for:

1. static webpages of content that do not get updated frequently (use a standard UOW public web-page)

2. formal or promotional one-way communication or publishing of final project outputs (use a standard UOW public web-page)

3. information that is for UOW staff only (use the staff intranet)

4. one-off or private blogging assessment tasks (use the simple blog tool inside Moodle) especially where the staff or students are not motivated to maintain the blog from one semester to the next

While there may be overlap between the two platforms in certain instances, the public website should remain the location at which marketing material is published. Information that is particular to UOW staff (ie: general announcements) should continue to be published through the UOW Intranet

TEMPLATE AND THEME

Each UOW Blog is established using a standardised UOW Brand Approved Template. The use of a standardised template and theme ensures visual consistency across all UOW Blogs. The template and theme currently in use employs the UOW Corporate Palette, logo and disclaimer as standard on all UOW Blogs. These cannot be altered or removed.
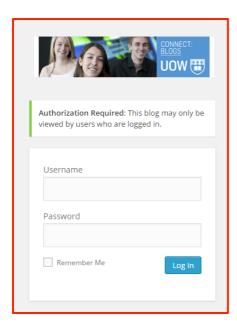
VIEWING THE BLOG IS DIFFERENT TO WRITING THE BLOG

The Blog looks different depending on who is looking at it and what they are doing. A reader of the Blog will only have access to the published information put there by you and your authors. To write a post (ie: publish information on the blog) you must log in and use what is called the 'Dashboard'.

HOW TO LOG IN

When a new UOW Blog is created it is set to private by default. This means that it cannot be accessed without a username and password. When you attempt to access the site you will see the following scree
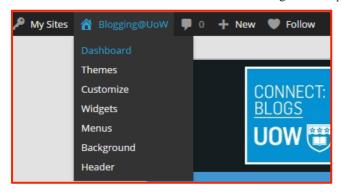

The UOW Blogging Service is linked to UOW's user database, as such, your username and password is the same as your **UOW staff login details**

If you have submitted a request for your blog to be made public, and the request is successful, you will no longer need to log in to the blog to view its content. However, should you wish to make changes the blog, or create a new post, etc., you will need to log in in order to be able to access the Dashboard.

HOW TO ACCESS THE DASHBOARD

To access the Dashboard over the name of the Blog on the top level menu and click 'Dashboard'

You will then be taken to the non-public side of the Blog that is only accessible to account holders