

WEEK 1: PROMOTING 21st CENTURY SKILLS

Keeping an online reflective journal – some free tools

There is no ‘correct’ way to keep a reflective journal. What you choose to keep in your journal and how you choose to keep it is completely up to you. No-one knows what works for you better than you do!

You may find that an old-fashioned pen and paper is the easiest way for you – and that’s fine! But if you prefer to keep a record of your development, here are a few free tools you could use:

Padlet: (<https://padlet.com/>)

You will need to create an account (or sign up with a Facebook or Google account). After that it’s very easy to use. You can create as many padlets as you want and add images, links, documents or just text.



The settings on the right hand side of the screen let you choose your background and set privacy to control who can see your padlet.

The British Council MOOC team have used padlets on a number of courses. You can see examples here:

My classroom: https://padlet.com/clairers/profpractices_myclassroom

The view from my window: https://padlet.com/chris_cavey/exploringeng

Also available as itunes and Android app.

Stormboard: <https://stormboard.com/>

Stormboard is a more sophisticated tool that lets you share your thoughts and reflections with others. The free version allows you to share with up to five other users.

As well as links you can add notes and even sketches. If you like to have everything nicely colour coded, Stormboard allows you to choose the colour of your notes to keep everything neat.

In the paid for version you can share your boards with an unlimited number of other users.

Also available as itunes and Android app.

Spaaze: <http://www.spaaze.com/home>

Spaaze describes itself as ‘an infinite virtual cork board’ Like the other platforms it allows you to record share links, images, webpages etc. As the ‘infinite cork board’ suggests, you can move around your entire ‘wall’ and step back from it to see the whole picture of your notes.

Penzu: <https://penzu.com/>

Penzu is an ‘online journal’ which, like others listed here, allows you to record your thoughts, images and links. Penzu feels more like a notebook than those listed above with the screen resembling a notebook page.

One nice feature of Penzu is being able to share your journal with others who can then comment on your notes.

Evernote: <https://evernote.com/>

A very popular journaling tool. As well as the functionality of other tools, Evernote lets you create ‘to do’ lists and set reminders. You can also arrange your thoughts and notes into folders, tag your notes by theme and much more.

Also available as itunes and Android app.

Microsoft OneNote: <https://www.onenote.com/>

Downloadable as an app on PC, Mac and smartphones, OneNote lets you create very detailed 'notebooks' which can include drawings, audio recordings and pictures. You can share your notebooks with others. A very well supported app with lots of features.