

**ONLINE LEARNING: SUPPORTING AN
UNDERGRADUATE PHYSIOTHERAPY
PROGRAMME WITH ELECTRONIC LEARNING
ENVIRONMENTS**

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The Strategic Context

- Changes in Higher Education
 - more students, diverse backgrounds
 - more demands for flexibility in programmes
 - important developments in communications technology
- Coventry's response
 - Explore potential of electronic learning resources to support students



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Coventry's Virtual Campus

- Electronic learning environment (WebCT) introduced in 1999
- Coventry is a Web CT institute one of three in Europe
- **Study Webs** created for all 2000 modules
 - undergraduate modules
 - postgraduate modules
 - around 80% of Study Webs actively used in Physiotherapy
 - Moving to pilot Web CT Vista Sept 2005




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Study Web (password protected))
What students see - on and off campus

Discussion forum: students or staff post messages which are public to all module users

Resources: staff can input a variety of materials relating to the module, add links, pictures etc

Assessment: students can attempt quizzes, surveys, etc relating to evaluation of module or module content


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So how do we support our students? Some examples

- EBP and statistics for year 2 students
- “The Real Guide to Physiotherapy” for pre entry students

EBP: Supporting Students

- Students undertake an EBP module in year 2
- The Module develops
 - Research skills (theory and practice) and
 - EBP principles and techniques
- Students also develop data handling skills in a virtual learning environment (VLE)



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EBP: Statistics and data handling VLE

- One of the tenets of EBP is that you learn by doing
- Students are given clinical research scenarios and secondary data to analyse
- Students use the VLE to collaborate, discuss and demonstrate weekly data handling tasks



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EBP: Online statistics tutorial

WebCT
myWebCT Resume Course Course Map Check Browser Log Out Help

Control Panel **210ph Evidence-based Practice for Physiotherapists**

View Designer Options

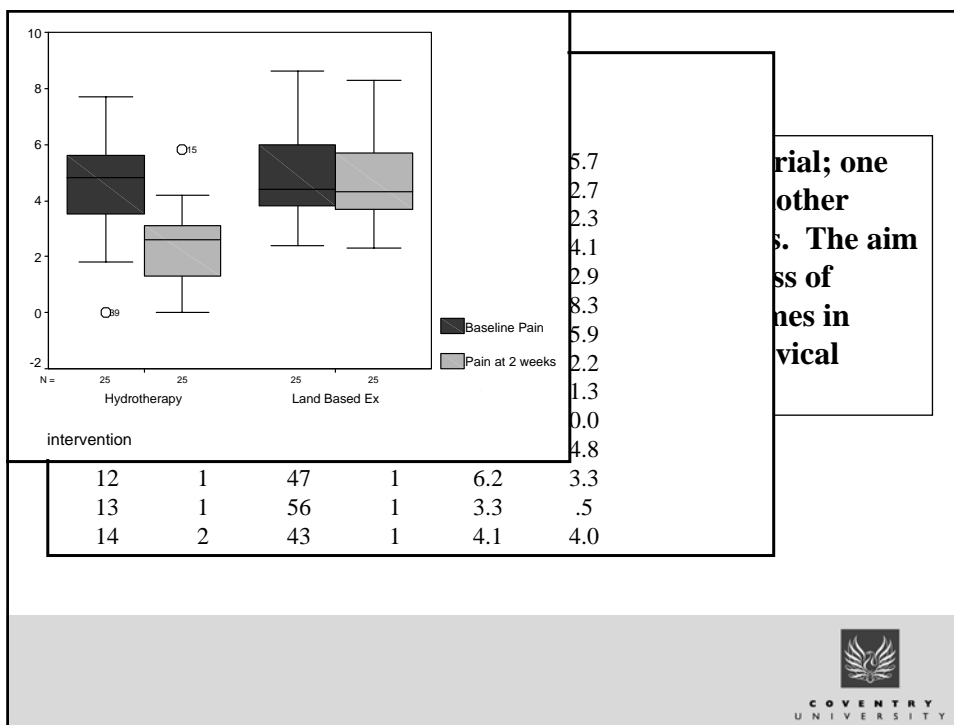
Designer Links > [Homepage](#) > [Discussion](#) > **Group E statistics area**

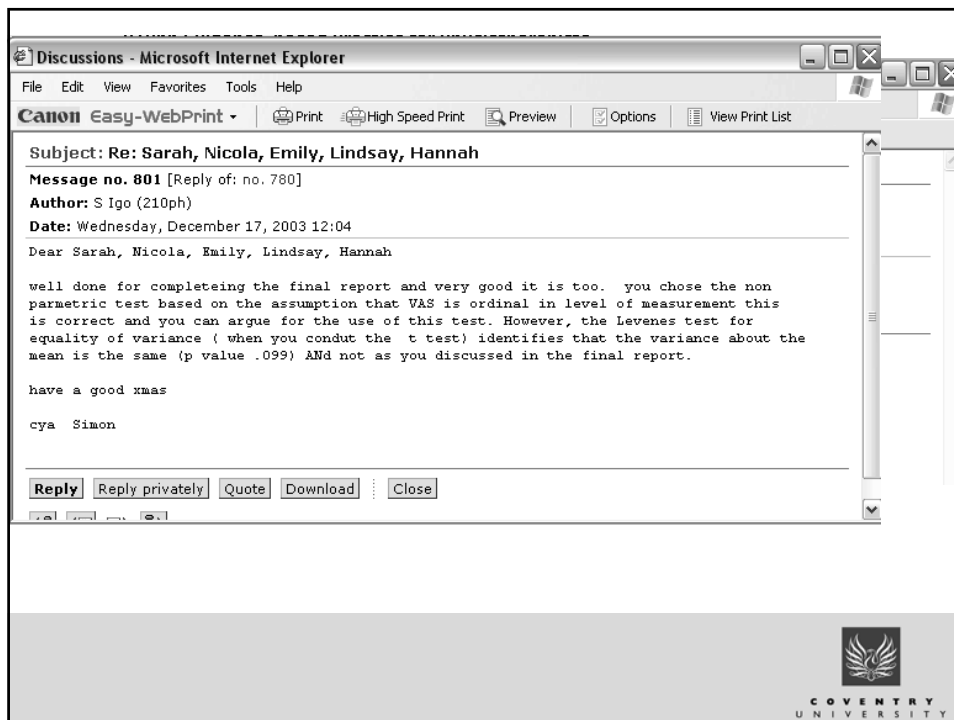
Discussions

Compose message Search Topic settings

Click on a topic name to see its messages.

<input type="checkbox"/> Topic	Unread	Total	Private	Anonymous	Locked
<input type="checkbox"/> Main	4	11	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Notes	0	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Group A statistics area	0	55	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Group B statistics area	0	63	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Group C statistics area	0	53	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Group D statistics area	0	72	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Group E statistics area	0	64	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Group F statistics area	0	88	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
All	4	407	<input type="button" value="Update"/>		





Underpinned by the principles of CMC

1. The statistics VLE enables asynchronous learning. The ability to learn and communicate irrespective of time and geography.
2. On line databases give access to FAQ's on statistical theory and use of SPSS.
3. There is the provision to "tap" on line resident experts for information, which includes students and tutors.

Kaye, (1989), Harasim, (1989), and McComb (1994)

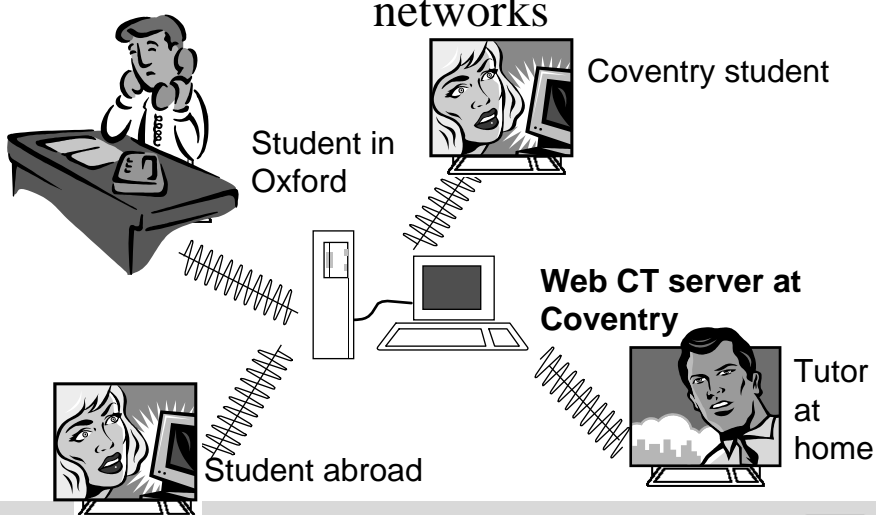


- Thus, CMC principles promotes:
 - The development of a social network
 - Information exchange
 - A collaborative learning environment offering peer to peer support



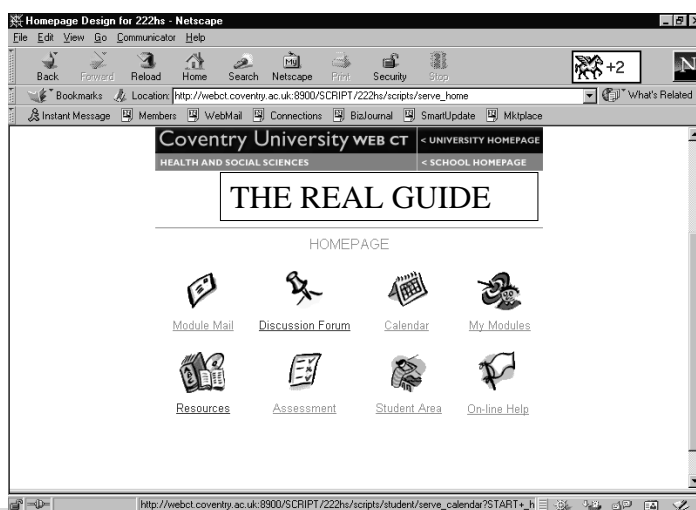
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Development of social and peer networks



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The Real Guide



Aims of Real Guide

- To smooth the transition to Higher Education
- To develop a web based enquiry and discussion forum for prospective entrants
- To facilitate development of coping strategies prior to arrival
- To aid in the recruitment & retention of prospective students



Benefits to students

- Participants belong to a virtual community which reduces their isolation and helps with transition into university life
- Creates an environment of peer to peer support
- An environment for information exchange
- An environment that enables pre arrival coping strategies



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Benefits to the University

- Forms part of the admission team's marketing and recruitment strategy
- Forms part of "retention of students good practice guide".
- Students feel valued by the University
- Introduces students to Web CT



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To Conclude



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Students comments about ‘online statistics tutorial’

“I enjoy using it - it’s an interesting and different way of learning new material”

“..being able to use it in my own time and at my own pace was extremely useful “

“The online statistics sessions allowed me to work at my own pace”

“It was nice to see other students finding stats difficult, using the discussion area allowed us to share our concerns.”

“It was like a security blanket . . It allowed me to contact other students and receive replies from the course tutor without having to wait a week”



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Student comments about “online learning”

- Lecture notes and ‘reading around’ a topic – maximising learning opportunities from the lectures
- Preparing for coursework assignments and exams (supportive material, practice tests, model answers)
- Opportunity for discussion with lecturers and fellow students outside ‘class-time’



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Thank You And Any Questions



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