

Why Wordpress(.com)?

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The mainstream free blogging services are Google's Blogger and Wordpress.com. Blogger is generally said to be simpler to use. So why is the college recommending Wordpress.com for your OCA Learning Log?

Wordpress is more sophisticated, it's got a structure, it's got a whole community of people that are supporting and growing it. You can grow your blog into a fully-fledged website, which you may want to do, especially when you get to the end of your course, and want to start showing your work to the world.

Wordpresses

Wordpress-the-software is a database (content management) system, and it's developed by a community of people (the jargon phrase is 'free and open source'). **Wordpress.com** is the free blogging service, with the option to buy (or not) extra services to customise your blog. **Wordpress.org** is the website for the software, which is free for you to take and install on your own website. There are huge libraries of free and paid for add-ons and services available, for developing your wordpress into just about any sort of website. It's mainstream, there's loads of help and support available, and it's developing fast.

But I only want a learning log....

A learning log is more than just a blog. As well as yourself, your tutor, assessors and (if you choose), co-students will all be using your learning blog in a different way, and they'll all need to be able to find things. With Wordpress you can manage the structure of your blog.

On the Dashboard (the admin side of your blog) you can:

- Group your posts into categories, and use those categories for displaying your posts, to create some organisation for your blog.
- You can create menus which is the best way of organising your blog posts.
- You can change all your categories and posts, rename them, rearrange them - without having to change any of your blog posts.
- You can browse through lists of all your posts, with the option for editing them in groups, rather than just one at a time.
- There's also a 'Media Manager' which gives you one place to manage all the images, photos, videos and pdf files, that you upload onto your blog.

- You can add boxes around your blog (widgets) to hold menus, category lists, facebook feeds, pictures, links to your other web places.
- You can backup your blog
- You can make your blog public, or hide it from search engines, or make it private and invite people to share it.

Also:

- You can copy and paste from 'Word' documents into your posts
- You can upload pdf files and add them as links, into your posts.

This is why Wordpress.com is the preferred choice. But you may want to read a couple of articles before you decide, for example:

Wordpress v blogger - basically, Blogger is simpler and Wordpress does more - see this article for a blow-by-blow account:

http://www.computerworld.com/s/article/9224441/Blogging_service_shout_tout_Blogger_vs_WordPress?taxonomyId=169&pageNumber=1

Growing your Wordpress blog into almost anything - this article will give you the idea:

<http://www.tripwiremagazine.com/2011/04/wordpress-sites.html>

If you still prefer Blogger, this website is a good example of how to make good simple use of images - a good example for Wordpress bloggers too:

<http://brooklyntowest.blogspot.co.uk/>

Finally: here is the signup link for a wordpress.com blog

<https://signup.wordpress.com/signup/>