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The Social Media for Learning in Higher Education Conference 2019

Telling our stories

Using social media to bridge geographical boundaries
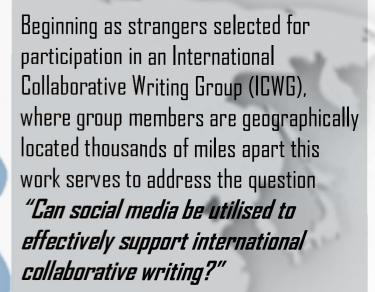
What were our Challenges?

- Cultural differences in expectations and approaches to work
- Finding suitable dates, and especially a suitable time to meet virtually
- Interpreting written communication (namely emails) to understand the nuances of what was actually being said
- Collating everyone's ideas, ensuring everyone had a voice and an equal stake in the conception of the paper

What would we do differently?

- Don't assume anything! Don't be afraid to ask for clarification, and always double check everything
- Start by identifying who is good at what, and we don't just mean in relation to writing, so who is best placed to set up work areas or host and schedule online meetings

Our tips for Success

- Take time to reflect your understanding of what has been said and then articulate it back to the group to ensure everyone is on the same page
- Use multiple means of communication
- Meet online as often as you can, always consolidating discussions with follow up messaging, emails and texts
- Try to meet physically if you can and when you do start with a social activity and schedule as many social activities together as you can!

space

Beginning as strangers selected for participation in an International Collaborative Writing Group (ICWG), where group members are geographically located thousands of miles apart this work serves to address the question *"Can social media be utilised to effectively support international collaborative writing?"*

Adopting an approach informed by collaborative autoethnography, focused on their experiences this work illuminates the stories of two of the six participants as they sought to establish themselves and their position within the group.

Illuminating the challenges encountered the purpose of this preliminary study is to support others who may be engaged in or considering undertaking work of a similar nature. As such this presentation will be of interest to any colleagues thinking about using social media as a means of communication when engaged in collaborative academic work where geographical locations prevent physical engagement.

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