



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

Academic Blogging Service Decision Tree

Use this decision tree to help you choose which
blogging platform best suits your needs.

Get started!

Photo by [Jess Watters](#) on [Unsplash](#)

1

Who are you?

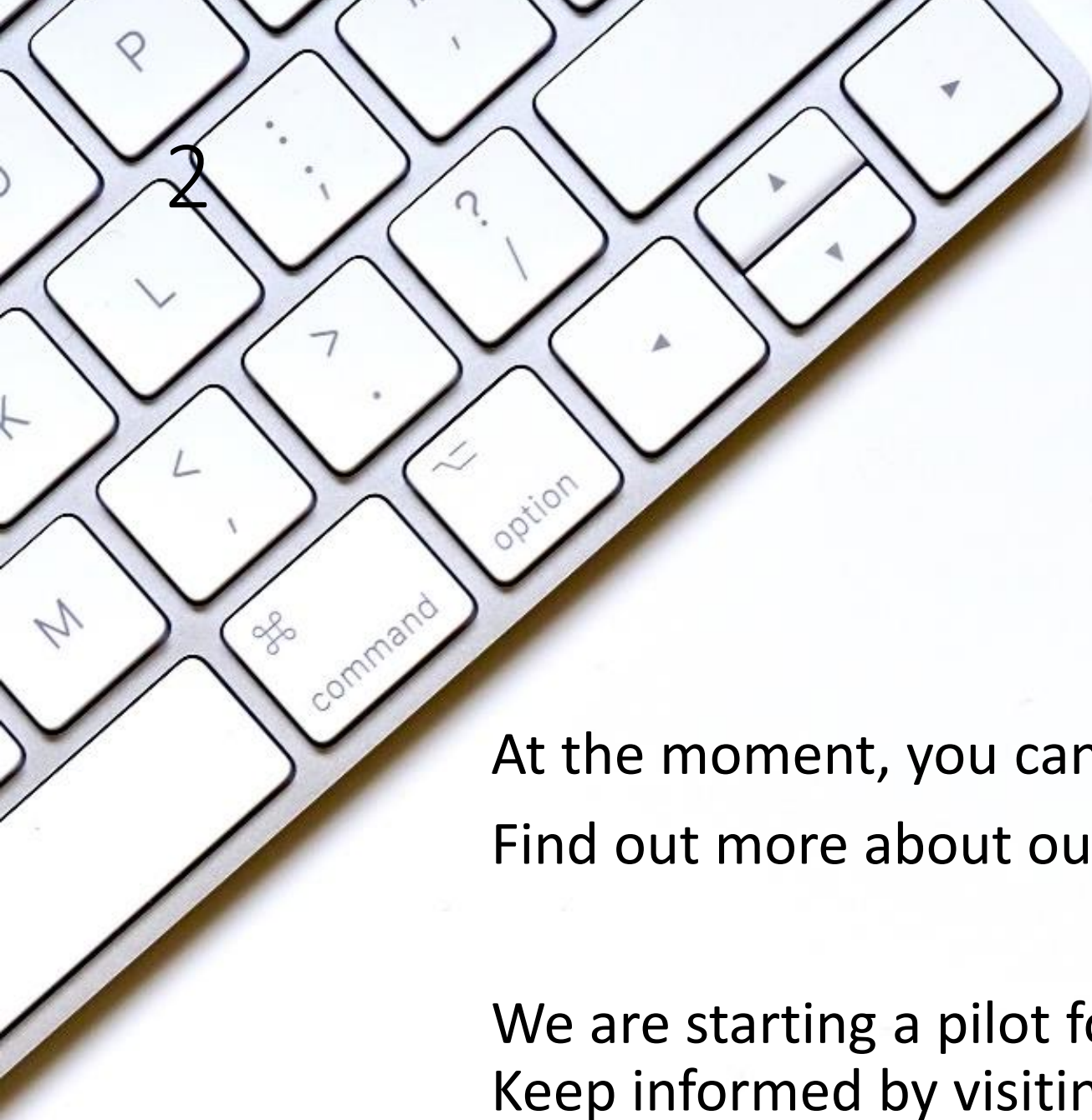
I am an undergraduate student. [Go to 2](#)

I am a taught postgraduate. [Go to 2](#)

I am a research postgraduate. [Go to 3](#)

I am a member of staff. [Go to 4](#)





2

At the moment, you can get a University blog using PebblePad.
Find out more about our [PebblePad service](#).

We are starting a pilot for a 'Domain of One's Own' site soon.
Keep informed by visiting our [Academic Blogging Service website](#).

3

What is the primary purpose of the blog you require?

- I want a blog for my research group or other community. [Go to 5.](#)
- I want my own blog to promote my ideas, reflections and research. [Go to 8.](#)



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4

What is the primary purpose of the blog you require?

I want a blog(s) to use with my students for teaching, learning or assessment. [Go to 6.](#)

I want a blog for my research project. [Go to 5.](#)

I want a blog for my unit, department or other University community. [Go to 7.](#)

I want my own blog to promote my own ideas, reflections and research. [Go to 5.](#)

I want a website for my unit, department or other University community. [Go to 16.](#)

5

Does the blog need to be editable by people from other institutions?

Yes. [Go to 9.](#)

No. [Go to 7.](#)



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6

Will the blog(s) be assessed?

Yes. [Go to 10.](#)

No. [Go to 11.](#)

7

Do you require that your blog will have a non-standard appearance or functionality? For example, it requires very specific branding styles or functionality such as mapping, visualisations, structured data display, image galleries or similar?

Yes. [Go to 9.](#)

No. [Go to 8.](#)



8

We recommend that you use the blogs.ed.ac.uk service. This is a service which allows staff and research PG students to have a WordPress blog. Only standard plug-ins and themes are available but the site is maintained by Information Services. [Find out more about blogs.ed.ac.uk.](https://blogs.ed.ac.uk)



9

Do you have funding to build your blog?

Yes, it is budgeted for. [Go to 12.](#)

Yes, to cover small costs. [Go to 13.](#)

No. [Go to 17.](#)



CCO [@fancycrave1](#)



Does your assessed blog require a rubric, due date or structured workflow?

Yes. [Go to 14.](#)

No. [Go to 11.](#)

11

Should it be possible for the blog you are planning to be visible outside of the VLE?

Yes. [Go to 20.](#)

No. [Go to 19.](#)

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We recommend that you request a customised blog. This is a service which can be paid for and helps you set up a blog with the functionality you want or need. It can be cross-institutional, with editors from other institutions and it can have a very bespoke look or feel. [Find out more about customised blogs.](#)

As an alternative, you could have a DIY blog which you could develop yourself, and would cost less. [Find out more about DIY blogs.](#)

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You should set up a DIY blog. This is a service which has its own web hosting and which you can personalise to suit your purpose. For research related use, there will be charges for web-hosting. [Find out more about DIY blogs.](#)

As an alternative, you may want to pay someone else to build the framework of your blog for you. [Find out more about customised blogs.](#)

14

Do you require your students to be able to embed media into their blog, or should it allow creativity in terms of its appearance?

Yes. [Go to 18.](#)

No. [Go to 15.](#)



15

You got here because you are looking for an assessed blog with a structured workflow (rubrics, due dates, etc), which doesn't need to be made available beyond the VLE and you don't require students to add media or to personalise it's appearance.

We recommend that you use the inbuilt VLE blogging tools. These are easy for staff and students to use, allow a very structured assessment workflow but are limited in terms of the personalisation that is possible. Find out more about these:

- [Learn VLE tools](#)
- [Moodle VLE tools](#)

16

You should use EdWeb to build a School, Centre of official unit website and not a blog. This is important for website usability and consistency. This is something which is covered in the [Academic Blogging Service Terms of Use](#). Please see the [University Website Programme website](#) for information.

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The only service which is available free of charge for research project sites is blogs.ed.ac.uk. Although this is a flexible option, there are limits such as not being able to add staff from other institutions to your blog as an editor, and not being able to add your own themes and plugins. Anything more customised will require some level of funding. A [DIY blog](#) will cost a small amount for hosting charges, but you'll be responsible for the security and maintenance of your own site. A [customised blog](#), which can be built with a bespoke look-and-feel and with bespoke functionality, will be more expensive, but you won't be responsible for keeping the site maintained or secure.

If you are a member of staff in AHSS, you may have another option. The [Digital Innovation Team](#) may be able to help.

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You got here because you are looking for an assessed blog with a structured workflow (rubrics, due dates, etc), which may have to be made visible beyond the VLE and may require the student to personalise and/or upload different media to it.

We recommend that you use a PebblePad blog. These allow the use of a structured assessment workflow and allow students to personalise the blog but are a bit trickier to set up and use for staff and students than a blogging tool built into the VLE. [Find out more about the possibilities for blogging using PebblePad.](#)

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Do you require your students to be able to embed media into their blog, or should it allow creativity in terms of its appearance?

Yes. [Go to 20.](#)

No. [Go to 21.](#)



20

You got here because you require to use a blog for teaching and learning which is either not assessed or doesn't require a structured assessment workflow (due dates, rubrics, etc). It may or may not be required to be made available beyond the VLE and you may or may not require it to be personalised by students and for them to embed different media in their posts.

We recommend you use blogs.ed.ac.uk. [Find out more about blogs.ed.ac.uk.](https://blogs.ed.ac.uk)

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You got here because you are looking for a blog which doesn't need to be made available beyond the VLE and you don't require students to add media or to personalise its appearance.

You can either use blogs.ed.ac.uk or the inbuilt VLE blogging tools.

Inbuilt VLE blogging tools: These are easy for staff and students to use, allow a very structured assessment workflow but are limited in terms of the personalisation that is possible.

Blogs.ed.ac.uk: These integrate with the VLE, can be kept private or made public but allow personalisation and work well with rich-media. They don't support structured assessment workflows.

- [Blogging with Learn](#)
- [Blogging with Moodle](#)