

## Blog Tool

### Overview

The Blog is a tool that allows the creation of a journal which is available on the web. The way in which a Blog is used depends on each user, but normally a blog is used to contain updated information that the user wants to make available to other users in their course or work group. The information in a user's blog will be published in reverse chronological order. Within a blog entry it is possible to make links to other web pages, files and images.

### Reading a blog

Blogs are organised under the name of the 'blogger' (the blog author). When you first access the blog tool you will see a list of the names of everybody who belongs to the site. You can return to this list at

any time by clicking on **All the blogs** or on the  icon. The number of blog postings by each person is listed next to their name.



The screenshot shows the 'BLOG' interface with a navigation bar at the top containing 'Add blog entry', 'All the blogs', 'My blog settings', and 'Permissions'. Below this, there is a 'My blog' section indicating the user last blogged on 03-Feb-2009 at 12:02:48. The main content is a table titled 'All the blogs' with three columns: 'Blogger', 'Entries', and 'Last Updated'.

Blogger	Entries	Last Updated
Amanda	0	
Andrea	3	25-Mar-2008 10:55:25
Anniabel	3	27-Jan-2009 21:18:20
Anne	0	
Barney	11	22-Apr-2008 10:06:37
Betsy	0	
Carole	4	15-Jul-2008 14:39:43
Dave	0	
David	0	
David	0	
Deb	0	
Doreen	6	04-Oct-2008 04:39:05
Gavin	0	
Greg	3	03-Feb-2009 12:02:48
Jan	1	22-Jan-2009 11:31:55
Johannes	1	11-Jul-2008 17:14:16
John	0	

To read a blog, simply click on the name of someone who has made an entry.

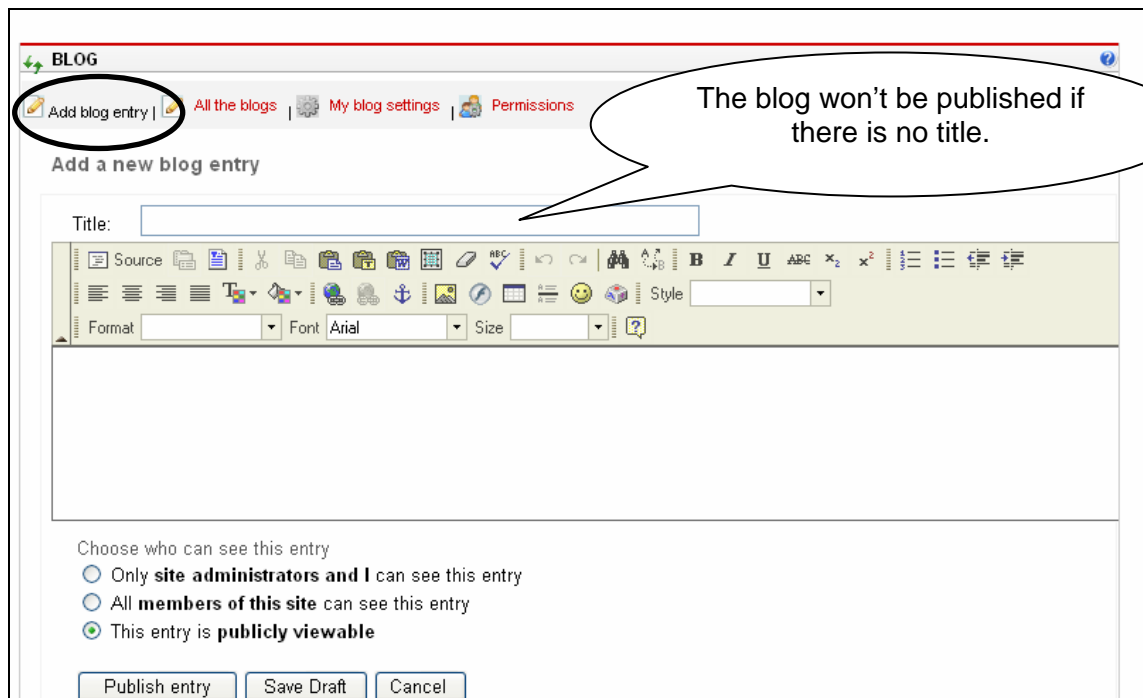
## Adding a Comment

To add a comment to a blog entry once you have read it, click the **Leave a comment** button at the bottom of the entry.



## Creating a New Blog Entry

1. Click **Blog** on the Tool Menu Bar, then click **Add blog entry**



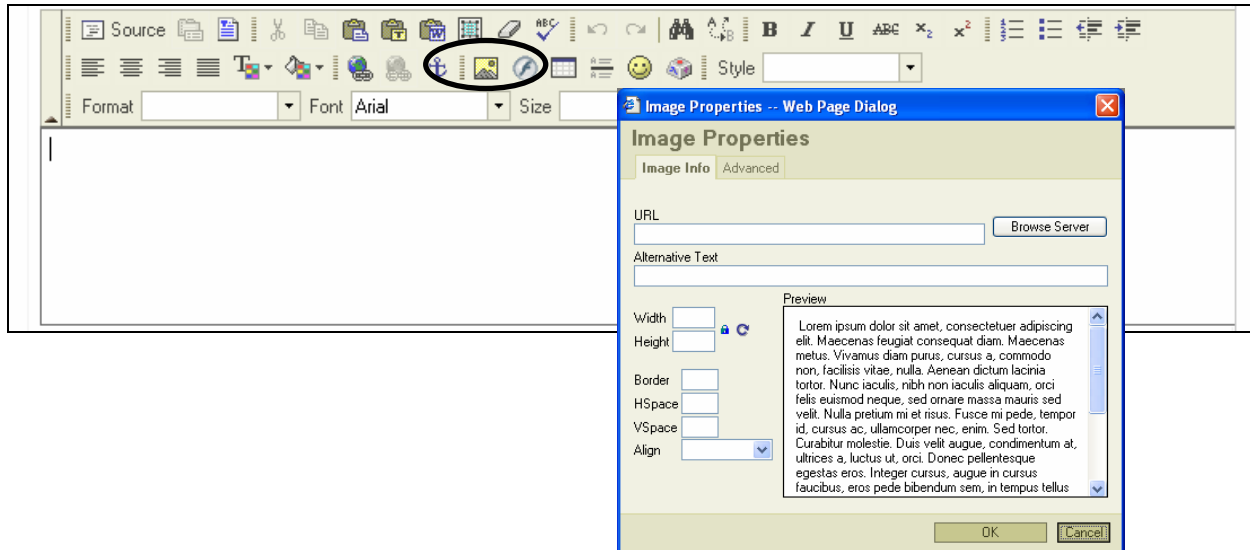
1. In the **Title** field, type in a title for the page
2. Type the content of your blog entry in the editor window.
3. Select the access setting to determine who will be able to see the entry. When a new entry is created the **publicly viewable** option is automatically chosen. If the use of the blog for a particular task requires students' entries to be viewed by only the Subject Coordinator, students will need to be instructed to change this option for each post they make to **Only site administrators and I can see this entry**.

**Note:** The settings "All members of this site can see this entry" and "This entry is publicly viewable" are identical – i.e. only members of the site will be able to see the entry.

## Adding Images

In order to include a picture in a blog posting you need to upload the image file into the Resources tool. This can be done from within the blog editor so you don't need to go out of the blog tool to do so.

The first step is to click on the insert image button:  in the blog editor toolbar.



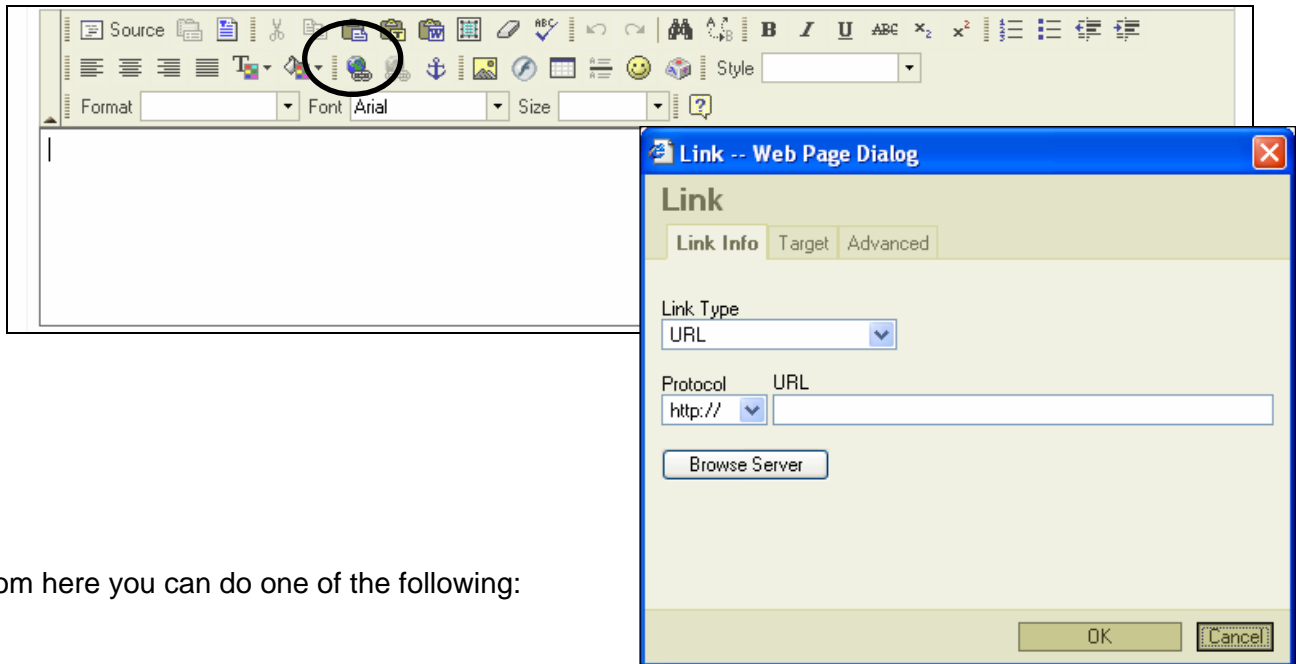
From here you can do one of the following:

4. Specify the web address (URL) of an image that exists on another web site; or
5. Use the **Browse server** option to select an image that has previously been uploaded into the Resources area of this or another *Interact* site;
6. Use the **Browse server** option, followed by the **Browse** and the **Upload** buttons to first upload an image from your local computer or USB drive into the Resources area and to then choose this image within the **Browse server** dialog box.
7. An image could also be located in the Resources area of your "My Workspace". In this case, make sure that you make the file visible to all *Interact* users by editing the file's details to make it publicly viewable. See **Modifying your profile** below.

Ideally all images should be resized and optimised for the web and should be no larger than 500x300pixels and no bigger than 30 kilobytes.

## Adding links

Click on the link button  in the editor toolbar



From here you can do one of the following:

- Add the URL in the web page window.
- Add links to images and other files on the server via the **Browse server** option.

## Edit or remove a blog entry

You are able to edit your own blog entries, but not those of others. To edit an entry:

- Click on the entry to be edited or removed
- Click either the **Edit entry** or **Remove entry** button below the blog

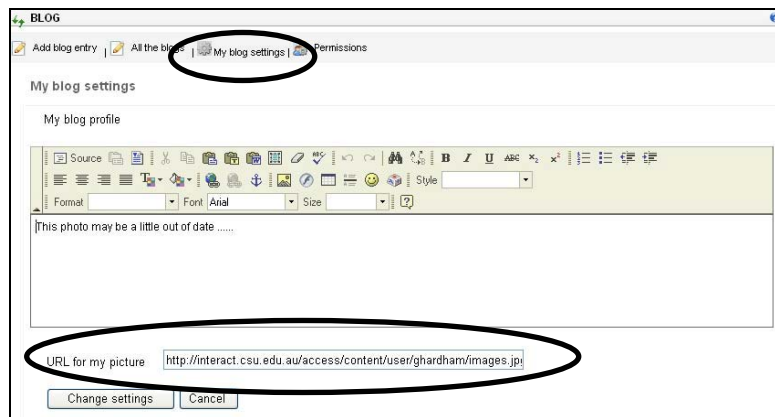


## Modifying your profile

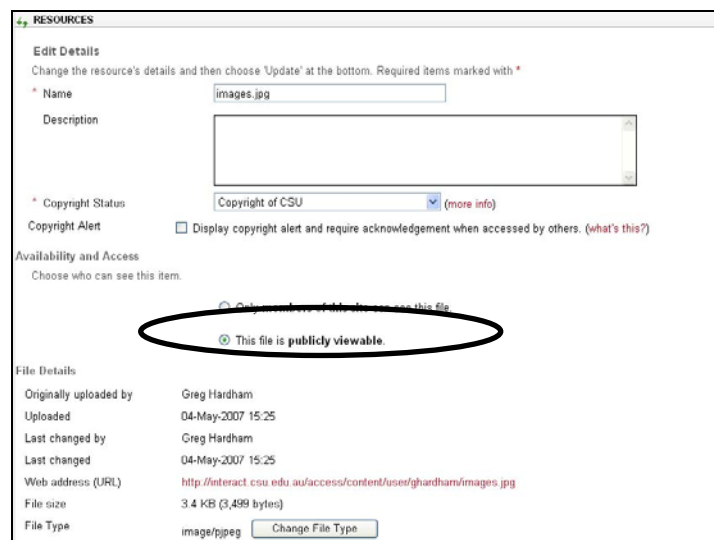
When viewing the blog posting of a particular blogger, the person's profile information is displayed in the right hand column. You can enter textual information and upload a picture that will be displayed as part of your profile. This gives you the opportunity to add character to your blogs.

To enter or modify your blog profile, choose the **My blog settings** option.

To enter a picture into your blog profile you can either specify the web address (URL) of a picture that is already on the web, or you can first upload an image into the Resources area and then copy and paste the link into the URL field in the profile editor.



Alternatively, the image could be located in the Resources area of your **My Workspace**. In this case, make sure that you make the file visible to all *Interact* users by editing the file's details to make it publicly viewable:



## Further text editor information

The Blog tool uses a text editor called the FCK editor (its name is based on the initials of the author). A **Users Guide** for the FCK text editor is available at [http://docs.fckeditor.net/FCKeditor\\_2.x/Users\\_Guide](http://docs.fckeditor.net/FCKeditor_2.x/Users_Guide)

## Permissions

**Subject Coordinators will need to be aware of the default permission settings and the implications of these so that they can adequately ensure that the blog meets the needs of the learning design of the subject.**

- Subject coordinator can read any entries. This is a default and unchangeable.
- Subject Coordinators can delete any comments if enabled in Permissions. (*Subject coordinator comments.remove.any* – see image below).
- The Subject Coordinator has the ability to adjust the following permissions for students:
  - write in any participant's blog (*Student entry.write.any*)
  - read any participants blog entry (*Student entry.read.any*). This could be used if all students are required to view each others' entries once an activity has been completed.
  - delete comments in any participant's blog (*Student comments.remove.any*).



Role	create	entry.write	entry.write.any	entry.read	entry.read.any	comments.add	comments.remove.any
Extended Access	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Staff	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Read Only	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Subject Coordinator	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Here the default permission has been changed by the Subject Coordinator to allow Subject Coordinator to remove any comments.

The Blog Permissions link displays blank page for students. It is a dead link and is only accessible by the Subject Coordinator.

## Acknowledgement

This material is based upon a Blog Quick Guide prepared by Barney Dalgarno from the School of Education, Wagga Wagga.