

Twitter for Students

In recent years a range of web sites and services have developed that offer users greater interactivity and personalisation. They are sometimes called Web 2.0 or social media websites and they offer many potential benefits to staff and students in Higher Education.

This document will introduce [Twitter](#).



Figure 1 Twitter URL and Home Page

Twitter is sometimes called a micro blogging service. Registered users can post small items (or Tweets) up to 140 characters in length. Anyone can search Twitter and if one registers for a free account a range of additional services are available including posting your own tweets and replying to others, setting up customised searches and more.

Twitter has a high media profile in part down to celebrities who use the service but the service also offers some great educational opportunities. For instance students might choose to “follow” the postings of famous (or at least relevant) academics, journalists, authors and the like.

See following pages for more screenshots and a video clip.



Figure 2 Search Twitter

Twitter can be very useful even without signing up for a free account but signing up offers some advantages (as mentioned above) including the ability to “Follow” other users. This enables the creation of a personalised stream of Twitter updates from the people users choose to follow.

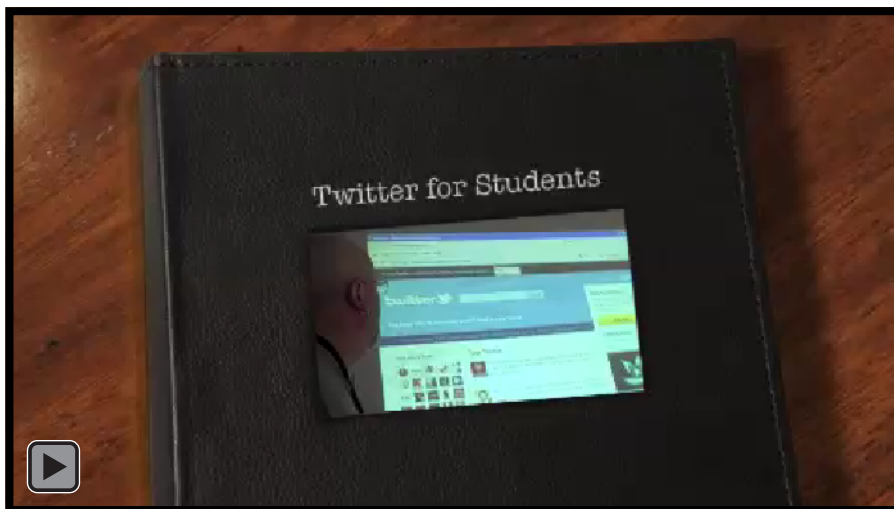


Figure 3 Video Demonstration of Twitter

See following page for another screenshot and more information.

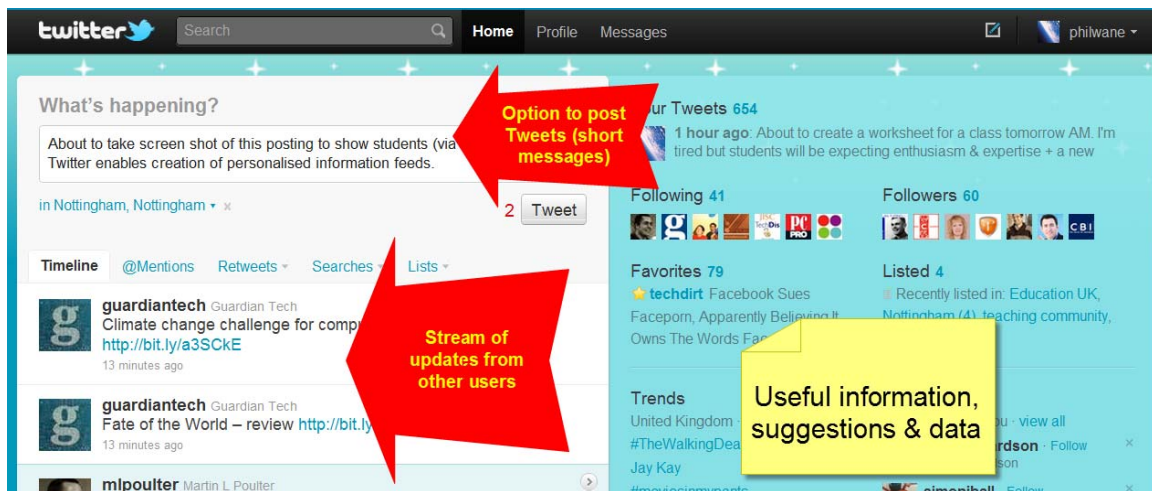


Figure 4 Example of Personalised Twitter Feed

Exercise: Visit Twitter (www.twitter.com) and search for terms relevant to your discipline. Have a look at the some of the results that are returned. Look too at the details of the “person” posting the messages or “Tweets” since they may be posted by individuals or on behalf of organisations. One of the strengths of Twitter is that one can rapidly create an effective network of worthwhile contributors since one source will often cite or directly link to other useful Twitter users. Note too that Tweets can contain hyperlinks – so users often post messages about useful articles they have seen and the posts (or Tweets) often link to the original source item (which you could then bookmark). A particular strength of Twitter is the ability to use it from suitable smart phones. This means that users can interact with Twitter away from deskbound computers and even laptops.

If you are impressed by the potential of Twitter then consider signing up for a free account.

Note to NTU staff.

This worksheet has been made available via the NTU Learning Object Repository (LOR).

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