Lessons learned: 3 years of using social networking as a pre-sessional transitional tool for new students

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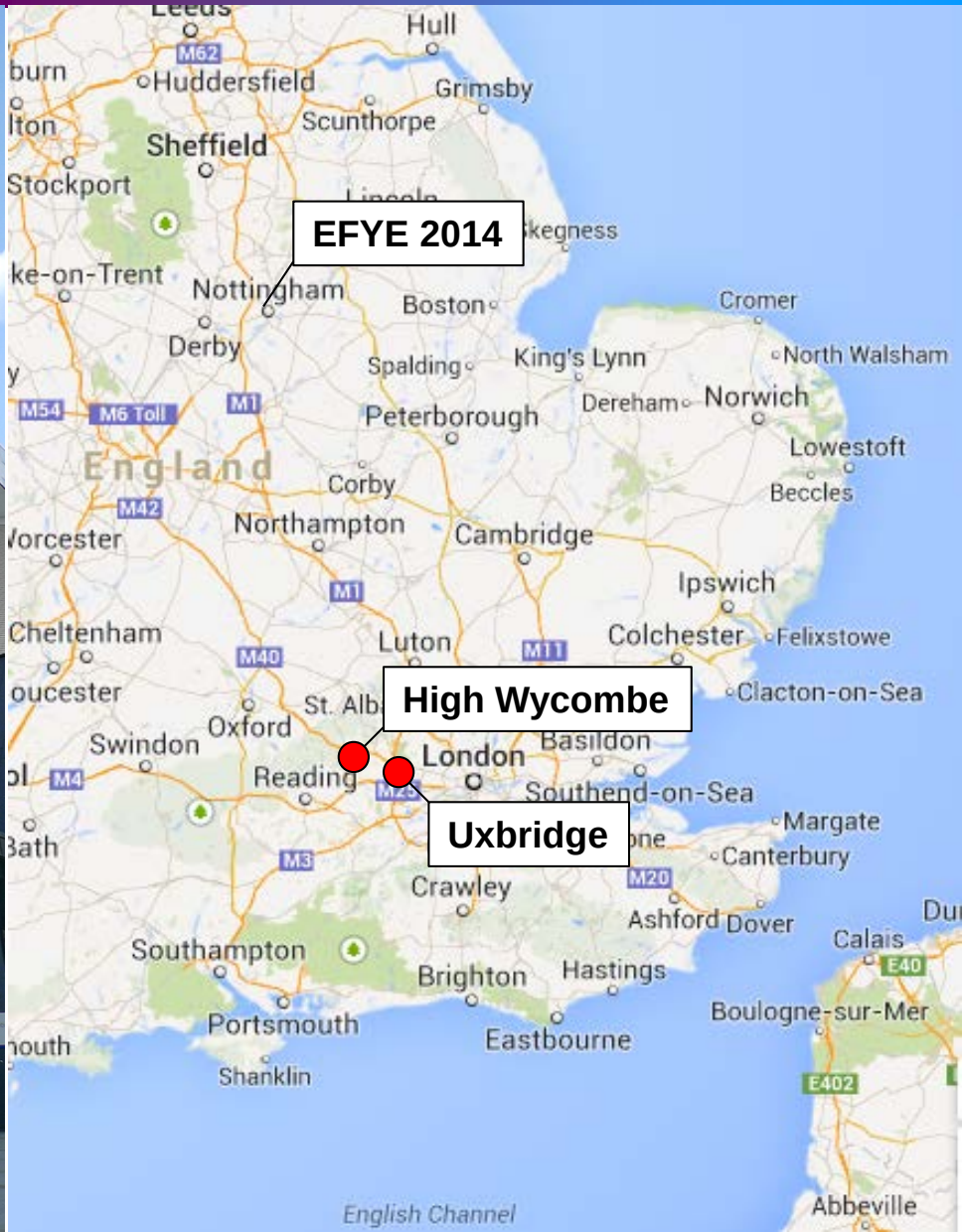
Bucks New University: Where are we?

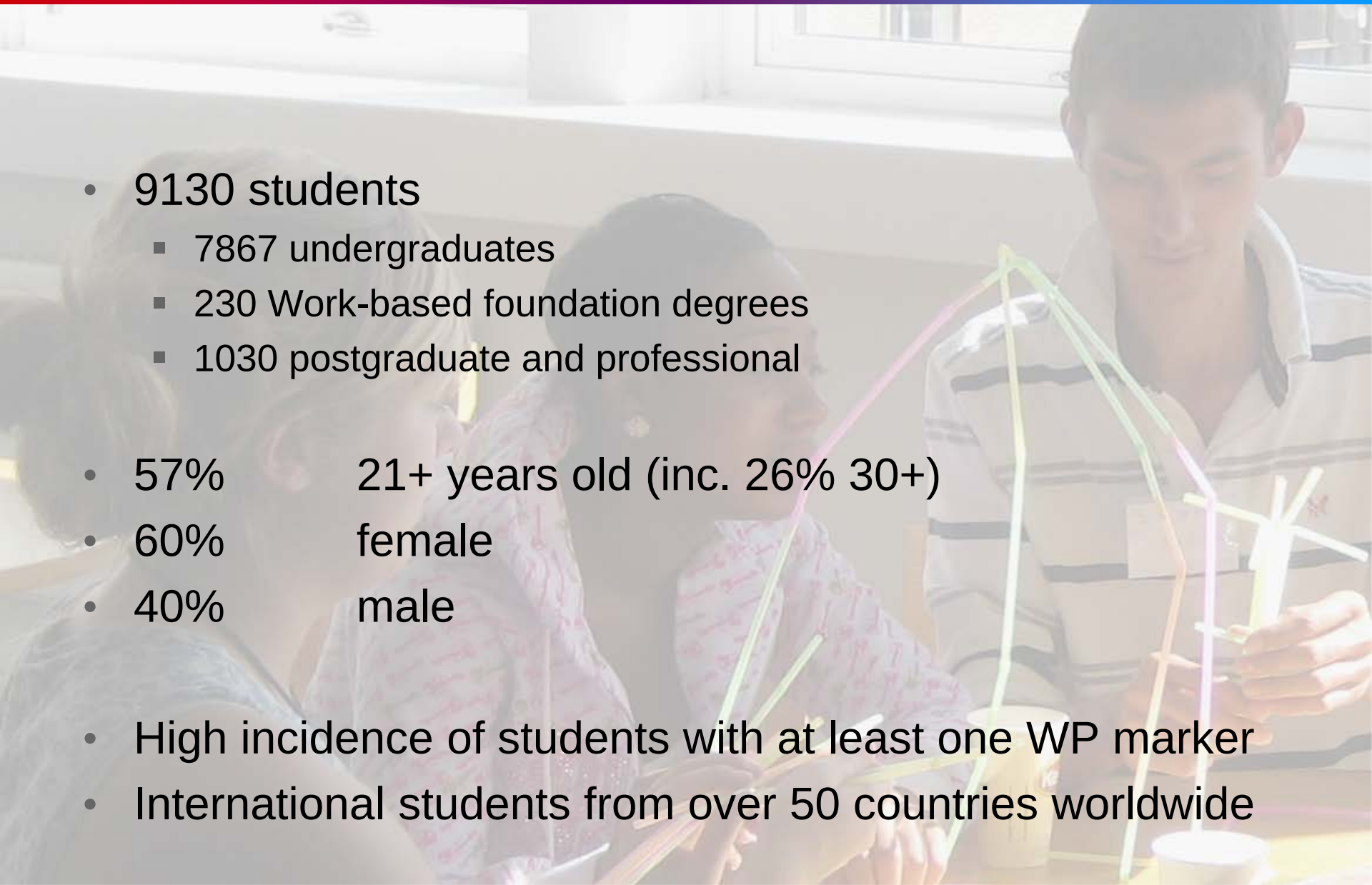


Bucks New University: Vision and Mission

- Awarded full university status in October, 2007

- Our vision is to be a leading professional and creative influence, shaping higher education for the benefit of people and employers
- Our mission is to put our students first and work responsively with the very best partners to influence, inspire and nurture talent for professional and creative careers

Bucks New University: A diverse student body



- 9130 students
  - 7867 undergraduates
  - 230 Work-based foundation degrees
  - 1030 postgraduate and professional

- 57% 21+ years old (inc. 26% 30+)
- 60% female
- 40% male

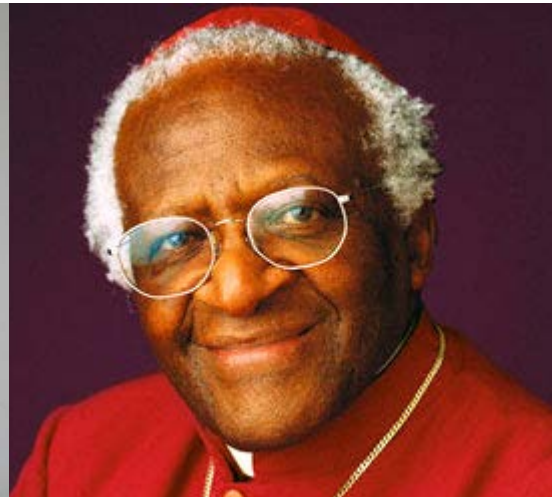
- High incidence of students with at least one WP marker
- International students from over 50 countries worldwide

The Learning Development Unit

- To provide academic advice, guidance and resources both online and via lectures, workshops, small group and one-to-one tutorials to any student whatever their ability, year or course, to help ensure they achieve their maximum potential

Richard III
3rd (C)

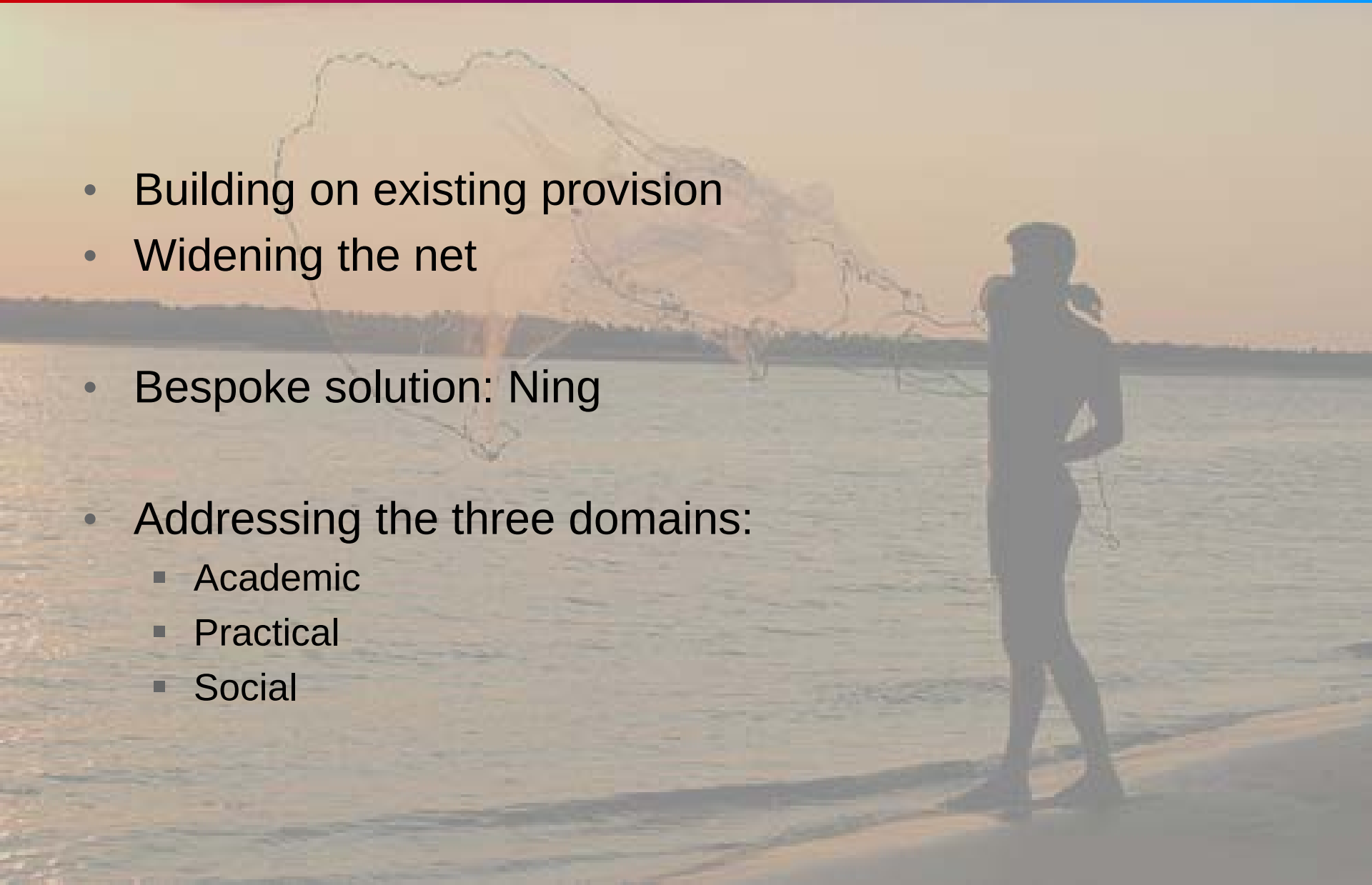
Desmond Tutu
2.2 (B)



Gok Wan
2.1 (B+)

Damian Hirst
First (A)

Why use social networking to support transition?



- Building on existing provision
- Widening the net

- Bespoke solution: Ning

- Addressing the three domains:
  - Academic
  - Practical
  - Social

Startonline

bucks new university

Home | Living | Accommodation | Student Services | Students Union | Facilities | Forum | Members | Groups | My Network

Forum

Edit

Bucks New University GYM
1 Reply
Started by Jack Rushant. Last reply by Ian Baldwin on Sunday.

Ask any question!
25 Replies
Started by startonline. Last reply by Georgie Price Sep 8.

Accounting&Finance
9 Replies
Started by Deborah Serwaah Simon. Last reply by Zeba Zanib Sep 7.

Roommate 1 Reply
Started by Muhammad Ali. Last reply by Georgie Price Sep 6.

Psychology/criminology
Started by Hassan Aug 30.

+ Add a Discussion View All

Members

Edit

Edit

Hello and Welcome to Startonline!

In case you didn't know, this is a site that helps make sure you're comfortable with the whole 'moving to University' thing before you actually get here in September! Use it make friends, find out about your course and pick up some top tips so you're really making the most of your time here (I know I did!). If you're signed in you can explore all tthe content in the tabs above and be sure to use the discussions and groups to find people on your course or who will be staying in the same halls of residence and start to make new friends.

You might also be interested in attending one of our Headstart courses before Bucks Welcome week begins. These are designed to give you an introduction to the kinds of academic skills you will need to be successful in your first year at university and also give you a valuable opportunity to meet new people and explore the university before you arrive. Follow this link to the online store for further information on Headstart and how to book a place on of the courses: Headstart

See you later!

startonline

Sign Out
Inbox (4 new)
Alerts
Friends – Invite
Settings

Latest Activity

Edit

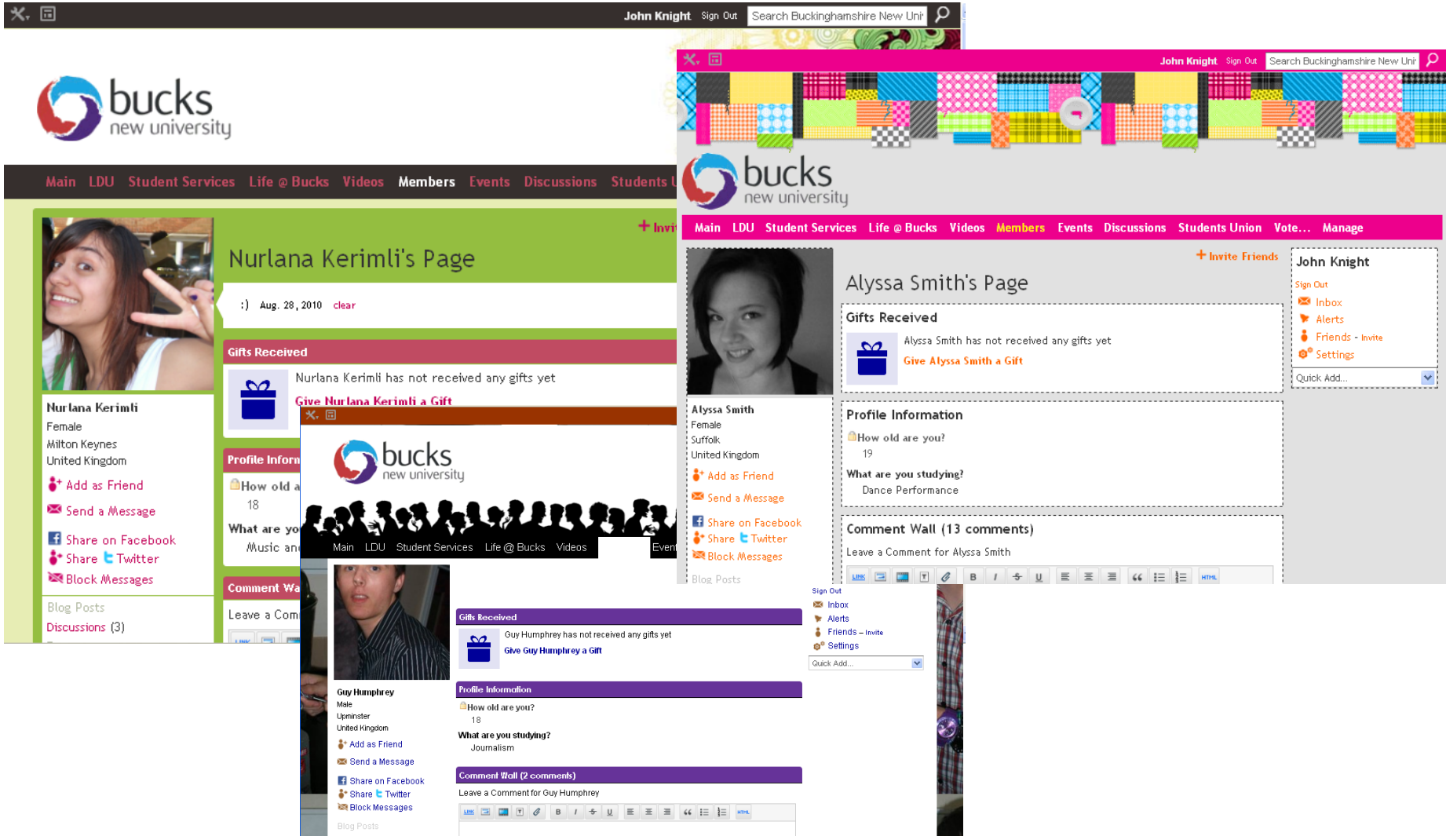
Georgia Nicholls joined Georgie Price's group

Computing
14 hours ago
0

Georgia Nicholls is now a member of Buckinghamshire New University startonline
14 hours ago
Welcome Them!

Megan Connell, Chhya

Startonline



Five easy pieces

- Privacy issues
- Student use
  - Social
  - Practical
  - Academic
- ‘Pictures and conversations’
- Staff involvement
- Management

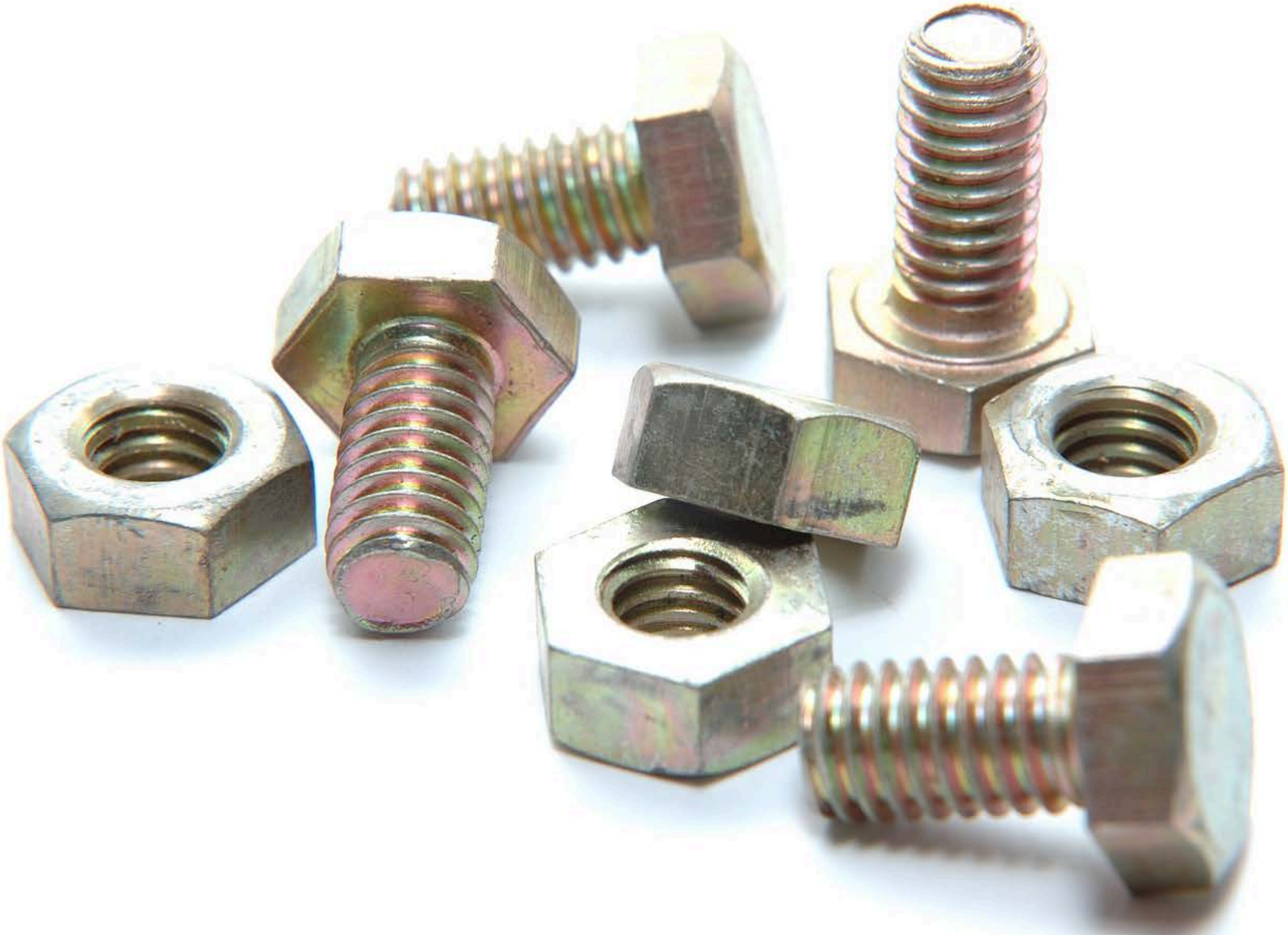
Privacy issues?

I never said
‘I want to be alone’.
I only said ‘I want to
be left alone’.

There is all the
difference.

It’s all about the social

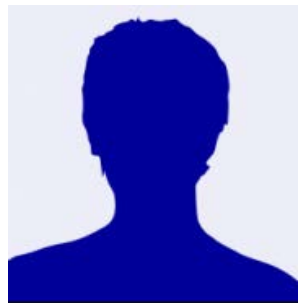
And the practical



The academic?

Pictures and conversations

- ‘What’s the use of a book,’ asked Alice, ‘without pictures and conversations...’
  - (Carroll, 1865/2008, p.7)
- Personal, personable communication is a vehicle for learning and engagement



Overcoming barriers to staff involvement

- Time
- Fatigue
- Skills
- Expectations

Early engagement
Clear guidelines
Piggy-back
Beyond the usual suspects

(Birnback and Friedman, 2009)

Managing social networking projects

What next?

- Moving to Facebook and Google +
- Greater integration with other transition initiatives: Bucks Welcome
- Senior management support
- Really good student coordinator

Useful references

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