

How to go about it

- Read the title and skim the whole passage to get an overall idea of the content. Spend no more than two minutes skimming the passage at this stage.
- Learn to analyze the headings quickly. Look at heading (i). Put a box around *result*. Does it mean 'outcome'? Would you expect to find results at the beginning, middle or end of the passage?
- For heading (ii), put a box around the word *aims*. What tense do you expect to see in the paragraph? What words are similar to *aim*: *goal, plan, hope, want?*
- For heading (iii), there is no noun like *aim* or *result*, but can you translate the word *what* into a noun? Is it *methods, ways, premises*?
- Use the same methods with headings iv–ix. You will not need to use all of the headings.
- When you have finished, always check the sequence of the headings you have chosen to make sure it makes sense.

READING PASSAGE

You should spend about 20 minutes on **Questions 1–13**, which are based on the reading passage below.

Questions 1–6

The reading passage has six sections, **A–F**.

Choose the correct heading for each section from the list of headings below.

List of Headings

- **i** The expected result of the project
- **ii** Further aims of the research project
- **iii** What the research project is based on
- **iv** The use of expertise from countries around the world
- **v** A need to concentrate on academic integration
- **vi** A lack of knowledge about the effect of social networking on student retention
- **vii** An emphasis until now on academic rather than social integration
- **viii** The reason for using Facebook to recruit students
- **ix** Increasing the chance of withdrawal

1 Section **A**
2 Section **B**
3 Section **C**
4 Section **D**
5 Section **E**
6 Section **F**

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Face-to-face or Facebook?

Can online networking sites help new students settle into university?

A Can online networking sites such as Facebook and MySpace, help new students settle into university social and academic life and minimize the chance of them withdrawing from their courses?

Researchers at the University of Leicester are now looking for first-year University of Leicester students who use Facebook to help their pioneering research into this issue. They should not be too difficult to recruit. The reason for this is that student use of the online networking site Facebook is running at a phenomenal level, with almost 10,000 present and past students and staff participating.

Currently, 95 per cent of 16–18 year olds intending to go to university are using social networking sites like Facebook and MySpace.

B 'Yet we know little about how this phenomenon impacts on the student experience and, in particular, if and how it helps them integrate into university life,' commented Jane Wellens, Education Developer in the University of Leicester's Staff Development Centre. She is working with Dr Clare Madge, of the Department of Geography, Tristram Hooley, of CRAC, the Career Development Organisation, and Julia Meek, an independent evaluation consultant.

'The expectations and online experience of the latest and next generations of students requires universities to think carefully about how, and whether, to use these new technologies and meeting spaces to enhance the social aspects of student integration into university life,' she further commented.

C Academic and social integration into university life are key factors influencing individual students' experiences and the likelihood of their withdrawing from their student courses. Until now most research in the field has concentrated on academic support rather than integration into the wider social world of the university.

Students are now so used to using social networking sites that one university in the US has actually been running sessions to encourage students to build up face-to-face networks. One aspect of the Leicester project is to explore whether there are differences in the longevity and nature of university friendships that students establish face-to-face compared with those they make online through social networking sites.

D The Leicester project builds on internationally acclaimed work the University has already started on teaching and learning online. 'We recently used Facebook as a means of encouraging students on an online module to get to know one another,' Jane Wellens said. 'This raised many issues such as where the boundary between public and private space is, and how comfortable students (and staff) of different ages feel regarding the use of such technology.'

The Leicester project also draws on internationally recognized expertise by this specific team of researchers in online research methodologies. As Clare Madge of the Department of Geography at the University of Leicester stated: 'This project will be using both an online questionnaire and virtual interviews, and will innovate in the use of Facebook itself as a site to conduct virtual interviews'.

E What Dr Wellens and her colleagues hope to establish from the new research project is how Leicester students are using Facebook as part of their social and learning experience and whether joining the University's Facebook network before they come to Leicester helps students to settle down more easily into university life.

They will also be looking to see if there is any way that university support services and academic departments can use the online social networking sites to help students integrate into university life, and how the sites might be reshaping our everyday lives in terms of the importance of place-based versus virtual networking.

F Research results are expected to influence university policies at Leicester and beyond. 'It may affect the way the University uses its Facebook network,' said Dr Wellens. 'One outcome might be that the University would use these sites to bring new students together before their arrival, or to bring together current and new students to provide peer support. It will also ascertain students' views about the ways in which the University and its staff should, or shouldn't, use Facebook for academic purposes.'

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Questions 7–10

Complete the sentences below.

Choose **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS** from the passage for each answer.

7 Access to Facebook by students is happening at a .....

8 Few details exist on how much networking sites help students fit into .....

9 Most research has in the past focused on .....

10 One aim of the project is to determine if the length and nature of ..... made online or face-to-face vary.

Questions 11–13

Do the following statements agree with the information in the reading passage?

Write:

TRUE	if the statement agrees with the information
FALSE	if the statement contradicts the information
NOT GIVEN	if there is no information on this

11 The only research methodology used at Leicester will be virtual interviews.

12 The Leicester team will focus on research from the UK rather the USA or Europe.

13 One possible development in the future is that existing students will help those who have just started university for the first time.

LIVEWORKSHEETS