Appendix 2 - Staff Participant Interview:

Interviewer:

What do you think are the challenges you found to group work in Higher Education online?

Interviewee:

So group work in Higher Education for me, the challenges are, it is different group expectations, so getting people together in a space where you can work collaboratively, um, is something you often have to do physically, so you have to meet in the library or you have to together in a meeting room, if you’re colleagues working together. So that can be quite difficult with time and if people aren’t on campus at the time, therefore a lot of people move online and use different sources. So, the challenges can be basically, ensuring that one person isn’t doing too much work and some people not doing enough work, and it’s hard to measure each other’s output, so I think, it’s quite challenging unless you are actually physically together in the room for days at a time, but most people work at different times, so the challenges are that you can’t really do that.

Interviewer:

What were the features that made you want to use Padlet on your research project?

Interviewee:

On this research project, the things that attracted me was that it was visual, so you could use it in the same way as you would use a pin board in an office. You could put any ideas up on there, I know at the beginning of the project we were just coming up with ideas and firing them on there and we wanted a way that me and the, my, project partner I was working with, that we could work on it together and view each other’s ideas, in a way that was like a pin board exercise, we could throw things on there, we could files on there, we could put notes on there, we could put images on there, and it was just a really good way to have perspective of both our work and collect it in a visual way, that wasn’t just a long list on a Word Document.

Interviewer:

What did you think were the positive features of using something like Padlet for group work?

Interviewee:

A lot of what I just said then, but what was really useful was is you can use it and different people can upload on it, at different times, you can edit each other’s posts. It’s a very good way of just collecting stuff together and it’s a lot more interactive, it’s a lot more engaging because it’s all colourful and you can see the different covers of reports you put on there, and, um, it’s something you can continuously add to, you don’t have to click save, we literally just had a tab, um, we both saved a tab on our computer so every time we go on the internet it would come up. So we could just add things all the time. And it worked. It was just a lot more engaging, a lot more interactive, and I quite enjoyed it actually. Enjoyable.
What do you think were the limitations for using Padlet for group work?

**Interviewee:**

The limitations are you cannot load Excel documents onto there, you cannot upload Word Documents onto there. We became in a part of our research project where we weren’t gathering ideas anymore and we actually just wanted to start writing. Um, we did start using Padlet, but we found it was a bit more clunky, because you would be, because it’s quite hard to download from, and you would be downloading – uploading – downloading – uploading. So we then shifted to use Google Docs because we could edit this in a more interactive way, and, this facility was not available in Padlet to open documents that would still be saved on there and that you could edit live in the same way to Google Docs.

**Interviewer:**

What other online platforms have you used for group work instead of Padlet and why?

**Interviewee:**

Um, we certainly used Google Docs and that was for making, writing articles. We also used Outlook more to transfer big documents to each other. This was mainly for Excel Spreadsheets, um, they didn’t present too well on the Padlet, so we used Outlook to transfer files whereas maybe before we weren’t. And also, we did use Dropbox, no we didn’t use Dropbox, but that is something I have used in group work before to transfer large documents between each other.

**Interviewer:**

Do you feel that the alternative platforms you’ve mentioned matched the positive features of Padlet?

**Interviewee:**

I would say, the positive features of Padlet are the ones which I will outline, which were all being; visual and engaging and enjoyable, about just getting ideas together. None of the other platforms offer that, I think Google Docs is great for working on documents, papers, articles, um, I think Dropbox is great for sharing large amounts of content and Outlook has its benefits for just quickly pinging across documents. Padlet is bringing things together, bringing ideas together, it’s kind of like creating a picture board or a design board or something like this, so, that’s really good and really cool and a great way for me a visual learner to just bring ideas together in that kind of scruffy ‘starting the research off’ time.

**Interviewer:**

What improvements do you think Padlet needs in order for it to be used for class based group projects?

**Interviewee:**

Um, I think it needs to do what Google Docs does. So, if on Padlet you could open a Word Document and be able to edit that and then it be saved automatically, that would be fantastic. I think, maybe
there should be a file app on there so you can post things on there, you could post individual documents on there. And um, but you can’t post a folder on there, so it would be good to have folders on there and that would do the same things as Drobox does. So it’s really just replicating those two activities in there. Also it would be really good if you could activate to have, um, email alerts to say that someone has uploaded something significant or you could send a ping to someone to say “Tom’s just put this great idea on there, have a look”

[Interview Closes]