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Making the Transition to E-portfolios

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MON: Making the Transition to E-portfolios (Helen Dixon)

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19 February 2018

Theme: Implementation

Format: Activity/workshop

Building up a portfolio of evidence is an established assessment process for a range of qualifications and is particularly suited to many vocational subjects where it is necessary to demonstrate skills and competencies (Wagner, 1998). Traditionally, portfolios have been paper-based, with folders of handwritten and printed evidence being collated for assessment and verification by awarding bodies. However, over the past ten years, many qualification providers have adopted the use of electronic or e-portfolios, enabling computer-based collation and assessment of evidence (Beetham, 2005).

The digitisation of portfolios has allowed them to be more accessible (Ball *et al*, 2010), efficient and flexible (Jisc, 2012), however, the successful implementation of an e-portfolio system requires a significant transformation in how evidence is documented and the assessment process is managed. An initial survey of tutors in a Further Education college as part of this study highlighted that comprehensive training in the use of e-portfolios is required in order to ensure the acceptance of the technology by educators. Furthermore, a need for tutors and learners to rethink the types of evidence presented for accreditation is required if qualification providers are to fully realise the potential benefits of e-portfolios and avoid situations where paper-based evidence is scanned and uploaded to the system, thereby creating additional work for tutors and learners.

In order to address these issues, a blended learning workshop has been developed for educators to assist them in making the transition to e-portfolios. The objectives of the workshop are to help educators to:

- ▶ Rethink how evidence is created and collated;
- ▶ Find out how they can use an e-portfolio system to manage the assessment process;
- ▶ Identify ways they can support students in developing the digital skills required to take

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Helen Dixon

17 January 2018

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ownership of their learning.

The workshop template is platform-generic, allowing it to be customised to the needs of different subject areas and supplemented with additional training resources related to specific e-portfolio systems. While e-portfolios can be used in a variety of ways, the workshop focuses on their use for assessment and will assume that participants are already familiar with the use of traditional portfolios for evidence-based assessment. Workshop resources are hosted on a MoodleCloud site, allowing open access to them. All resources are shared under a Creative Commons Attribution ShareAlike (CC BY-SA) licence in alignment with the 'open' ethos of the conference.

Keywords: e-portfolios, assessment, vocational education, professional development, open educational resources, blended learning

Extra content

[Multimedia poster](#)

[Accessible poster](#)



[Helen Dixon](#)

18:13 on 17 January 2018 (Edited 12:37 on 18 February 2018)

[MoodleCloud site](#) - Click Login as a guest and use password H818guest



[Helen Dixon](#)

12:27 on 18 February 2018

[Workshop Instructions - PowerPoint slides](#)

[Workshop Introduction - PowerPoint slides](#)

[Activity 1 - Assessment Objectives cards](#)

[Activity 2 - Digital Evidence cards](#)

[Activity 3 - Digital Skills cards](#)



[Helen Dixon](#)

12:36 on 18 February 2018

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Embedded Content

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[Mr Jonathan G Brown](#)

3:36pm 18 January 2018 [Permalink](#)

Hi Helen,

As we're creating more and more resources for the MAODE, the idea of an e-portfolio is an attractive one. Could you recommend any specific software as a starting point, or any examples of an e-portfolio done well?



[Mr Jonathan G Brown](#)

3:36pm 18 January 2018 [Permalink](#)

Hi Helen,

As we're creating more and more resources for the MAODE, the idea of an e-portfolio is an attractive one. Could you recommend any specific software as a starting point, or any examples of an e-portfolio done well?



[Mr Jonathan G Brown](#)

3:38pm 18 January 2018 [Permalink](#)

I'm not sure why that comment posted twice! No option to delete one.



[Amy MARSHALL](#)

7:04pm 23 January 2018 [Permalink](#)

Helen, As a primary school teacher, recognising there is a large emphasis on handwriting and spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG) skills, how would you recommend students creating an e-portfolio of their written work? As anything they compose in Microsoft Word (for example) may be self-edited and therefore - not representative of their own written ability. How do you get around this for assessment purposes?



[Steven Durant-Burgin](#)

9:08pm 28 January 2018 [Permalink](#)

Hi Amy,

An idea that I have to possibly solve this issue could be to either:

- ▶ Allow the students to use pen tablets (such as a wacom device) which wil allow

them to use their own handwriting in a document, or

- ▶ Take the student's hand-written word and scan it and upload it to an e-portfolio

Hope this thoughts are of use.

Regards

Steve



[Katherine Hinchey](#)

5:26pm 4 February 2018 [Permalink](#)

I read an article (*) about how two schools designed a framework for analyzing portfolio content in three phases, with two of the phases being formative assessment, and the last summative. They outlined questions the learners and teachers should ask when evaluating the portfolio pieces at each of the phases. I wonder if you are building on their work and taking it a step further with a focus on e-portfolios?! I'll be interested to find out!

* Dysthe, O. and Engelsen, K. (2004) 'Portfolios and Assessment in Teacher Education in Norway: A Theory-based Discussion of Different Models in Two Sites', *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*, vol. 2, pp. 239-258. [Online].
DOI: 10.1080/0260293042000188500.



[Claire Richardson](#)

9:14pm 4 February 2018 [Permalink](#)

Hi Helen,

I am looking forward to hearing your presentation. My limited experience of working in Further Education suggests that staff are frequently overworked with multiple demands on their time. It is great that this seems to be one of the primary objectives of your system is to minimize workloads associated with portfolios. Because if the pressures on staff in Further Education, I also think it is important to try and optimize the e-portfolio system before it is rolled out, to ensure that staff do not have to spend long periods of time learning different e-portfolio systems and/or trouble shooting potential technical problems.



[Steve Penney](#)

8:31am 10 February 2018 [Permalink](#)

Hi Helen,

Like the idea of eportfolios they would certainly work for me as a learner.

How do learners get feedback on thier work? How will they fit into an assessment framework?

Steve

[Denise McDonough](#)



6:58pm 10 February 2018 [Permalink](#)

I would like to see e-ports available in a google doc style so learners can keep their own archive. For this reason I have my own blog and cloud storage. Open Studio is an example of what is usually created with limited funding and stresses out users (me) when assessed turns me off completely by wasting time. Perhaps software one could use on OneDrive? Thanks for your tweets and content help and support.



[Helen Dixon](#)

5:18pm 17 February 2018 [Permalink](#)

Hi Jonathan

It would depend on what type of e-portfolio you are wanting to create and the content you will be sharing. Some people simply use Google Docs or a blog - Wordpress have a [portfolio](#) content type which may be appropriate. Google Sites is also an option if you want a website format.

I like this [example of a teacher's e-portfolio](#) on Weebly - if anyone else has any examples, please share!



[Helen Dixon](#)

5:26pm 17 February 2018 [Permalink](#)

Hi Amy

I don't think I can really add anything to Steve's answer - thanks Steve!

One of the objectives of my project is to encourage learners to produce digital evidence of their learning as traditionally it has been handwritten and paper-based so we are trying to promote digital skills which are beneficial for vocational learners. Consequently, we are actively discouraging handwritten evidence so I'm afraid your question is outside of the remit of my project!

Thanks for your interest - hopefully you will still find my presentation informative.



[Helen Dixon](#)

5:31pm 17 February 2018 [Permalink](#)

Hi Katherine

Thanks for the reference - I am not building on this work but will check it out later.

The focus of my project is the use of e-portfolios for evidence-based assessment so it is mainly summative. I realise that portfolios have varied uses and hopefully my project could be expanded in the future (by myself or others) to facilitate other uses of e-portfolios such as for professional development and reflective practice.



[Helen Dixon](#)

5:34pm 17 February 2018 [Permalink](#)

Hi Claire

Your experience of FE definitely aligns with mine and I am aware of the time pressures on staff. I have adopted a blended approach for the workshop as I am aware of how difficult it is for lecturers to get time out for training. It is clear that ineffective use of e-portfolios can add to the admin burden which is what I am hoping to eliminate with the workshop!



[Helen Dixon](#)

5:38pm 17 February 2018 [Permalink](#)

Hi Steve

With dedicated e-portfolio systems, tutors can assess evidence and provide feedback directly through the system. Assessment frameworks would be set up in the system so that evidence can be mapped directly onto the different competencies. This would be more difficult to do with generic systems like blogs so a separate rubric may be needed. As always, it is a case of selecting the most appropriate tool for the job!



[Helen Dixon](#)

5:42pm 17 February 2018 [Permalink](#)

Hi Denise

The inability to maintain an archive of work can be a problem with some proprietary e-portfolio systems. A simple portfolio could be created using Word or PowerPoint online if you are using OneDrive. Your study app has also identified Sway as a potential tool for presenting digital evidence!



[Dr Simon Ball](#)

9:33am 20 February 2018 [Permalink](#)

Hi Helen

Well done on a great presentation! Here is a summary of the comments and questions you received following your presentation (including those you may have addressed verbally). Please respond in whatever way you choose.

Best wishes

Simon

- ▶ Would you advocate they be exportable so learners can take their work when they leave?
- ▶ I remember when I started as a NVQ Assessor, we had 12 days training in our ePortfolio software. It was tough, but we used it to great affect for the students.
- ▶ Having used cards for learning design I would suggest that any descriptive text is

kept to a minimum and takes up as little space as possible to leave more time for capturing the detail in storyboarding workshops

- ▶ i would love to use tis training tool if possible please
- ▶ I would be really keen on exploring the use of your toolkit.
- ▶ How would you recommend to do the transition to eportfolios?
- ▶ What would the training that is not technical include?
- ▶ When do you think you might try out the workshop?
- ▶ Do you find your 'students' have been willing to complete the full portfolio?
- ▶ we are using eportfolios for our staff development it is a good way for us to learn about hte system by using it
- ▶ love the mobile access - does it use xAPI?



[Helen Dixon](#)

8:07pm 23 February 2018 [Permalink](#)

Thanks to everyone who took part in the conference - it was a brilliant experience!

Apologies for taking so long to answer the questions/comments but here goes:

- ▶ **Would you advocate they be exportable so learners can take their work when they leave?**
- ▶ Absolutely, if possible. Some proprietary systems aren't exportable but, where appropriate, students can create their portfolio using a blog or website and use it to showcase their work to prospective employers.
- ▶ **I remember when I started as a NVQ Assessor, we had 12 days training in our ePortfolio software. It was tough, but we used it to great affect for the students.**
- ▶ The transition can be difficult, especially for tutors/assessors who aren't confident with IT but they all think that it is worth it in the long run.
- ▶ **Having used cards for learning design I would suggest that any descriptive text is kept to a minimum and takes up as little space as possible to leave more time for capturing the detail in storyboarding workshops**
- ▶ Will keep that in mind - thanks!
- ▶ **i would love to use tis training tool if possible please**
- ▶ **I would be really keen on exploring the use of your toolkit.**
- ▶ You can view all the resources using the MoodleCloud site - see the links above! Feel free to adapt and reuse and let me know how you get on!
- ▶ **How would you recommend to do the transition to eportfolios?**
- ▶ The transition can be difficult for some staff so it is important to start with one or two cohorts and phase it in. Staff who are not confident with technology will need a lot of training and support and, as I emphasised in my presentation, it is important to look at the whole process, not just uploading evidence. Support from senior management is important and it may be necessary to check with the awarding body that they approve of the e-portfolio system.
- ▶ **What would the training that is not technical include?**
- ▶ The non-technical training is the card activities: defining the assessment objectives, deciding the evidence format and identifying the skills required. Staff

need to be trained in how to design the entire assessment process, not just use the platform.

▶ **When do you think you might try out the workshop?**

▶ I am hoping to do a pilot workshop with my Digital Learning Team within the next few weeks, and then roll out to all staff with their help.

▶ **Do you find your 'students' have been willing to complete the full portfolio?**

▶ As the portfolio is for the qualification, they need to complete it all. Students enjoy using the e-portfolio, especially the mobile app which is more convenient for them.

▶ **we are using eportfolios for our staff development it is a good way for us to learn about hte system by using it**

▶ I totally agree. I am planning to put my team through the CMALT qualification which is portfolio-based to help promote their use.

▶ **love the mobile access - does it use xAPI?**

▶ It is through a mobile app produced by the e-portfolio provider so I'm afraid I'm not sure what it uses.



[Dr Simon Ball](#)

11:39am 26 February 2018 [Permalink](#)

Many Congratulations Helen! Your presentation has been voted by delegates to be one of the most effective of the H818 Online Conference 2018 and you are officially one of our H818 Presentation Star Open Badge Winners! Please see how to Apply for your Badge here: <http://cloudworks.ac.uk/badge/view/33>

Well done!

Simon

H818 Conference Organiser



[Denise McDonough](#)

9:13pm 26 February 2018 (Edited 9:20pm 26 February 2018) [Permalink](#)

Congratulations Helen! Excellent project and presentation. I found it so useful in expanding my own understanding and practice. A couple years ago someone on H800 said OU used to have them.

I like your thinking - using Sway for creating digital evidence. It is so flexible and I am hopefully they will improve its functionality.

OneDrive is an idea - however it is linked to Microsoft Office subscription which isn't free and I preferred Google Docs - it could just be flavour of the moment :-)

Further to the comment about exporting work from e-ports: Haven't they been around for a long time? Don't they contain more than just digital evidence and rather more a learner's output many years of education that we call K-12? We need Katherine's to add xAPI in conjunction with some sort of link education VLE connection and Google/Amazon storage quota learners could sign up for when they start school that they 'own'. Robin DeRosa (<http://robinderosa.net/>) found in her inspiring open book project, that ended up as an

online resource - that ownership encourages engagement/responsibility/buyin...not "just the schools rubbish')

The emergence and transitory nature of the big platforms certainly add another level of challenge in the last decade which makes it very difficult to have a 'lifetime' account. The idea would be that when they graduate or leave education (student status) they would have the option to export it or pay a modest fee. The hope would be by the time they are adults they may have a sense as to its value for future study.

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