



KEYPAL

Tutor Guide to accompanying young adults in developing their ePortfolio

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ABSTRACT This document serves as a guide to tutors (or similar) who are accompanying young adults in the development of an electronic portfolio for skills development and acquisition.

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WP 4

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Table of Contents

KEYPAL	1
Glossary of terms	1
1 Foreword	4
2 Introduction to KEYPAL	5
Objective	5
2.1 Project Resources	5
2.2 KEYPAL Partners	6
2.3 What is an ePortfolio?	6
3 What Skills, Knowledge and Attitudes does an ePortfolio tutor need?	7
Objective	7
3.1 Your professional and educational background	7
3.2 Your personal qualities	7
3.3 Your tutoring approach	7
3.4 Your support for the principles of learning by portfolio	8
3.5 Support from your organisation	8
Summary	9
3.6 Self –perception questionnaire	9
4 How to get started with your ePortfolio project as an organisation	11
Step 1: Decide on the objectives of your ePortfolio project.....	11
Step 2: Decide on the contents of your ePortfolio.....	11
Step 3: Decide on the access levels and rights for the ePortfolio.....	12
Step 4: Choosing your ePortfolio tool	14
Step 5: Implementing the ePortfolio tool.....	15
Summary	15
5 How to get started with the ePortfolio development as a tutor	16
Objective	16
5.1 Useful resources.....	16
5.2 Prepare yourself	16
5.3 Prepare your young people to start their ePortfolio	17

5.4	Accessing the ePortfolio tool	17
5.5	Registering young people	17
5.6	Introducing the ePortfolio tool to young people.....	18
	Summary	18
6	Tutor – Learner Interaction: Supporting and facilitating ePortfolio-based learning.....	19
	Objective	19
6.1	The roles of the tutor in supporting ePortfolio development.....	19
6.2	Providing a suitable learning environment.....	19
6.3	Selecting a suitable ePortfolio tool for your learners	20
6.4	Supporting learners in developing the contents of their ePortfolio	20
6.5	Helping young people to judge their skills realistically.....	21
6.6	Supporting young people’s interaction via the Internet when developing their ePortfolios	21
	Summary	21
7	Feel comfortable on the information highways.....	22
	Objective	22
7.1	Advice when using the Internet and web-based ePortfolios	22
	References.....	23
8	The link between the ePortfolio and key-skills development	24
	Objective	24
8.1	Linking Key skills to ePortfolio development	24
9	The ePortfolio as a tool for promoting Reflection and Social Construction of Meaning	28
	Objective	28
9.1	ePortfolio and reflection	28
9.2	How can learners reflect on their work using the ePortfolio?.....	29
9.3	Social constructivist approach to ePortfolio learning	29
9.4	The ePortfolio as a means of communication	29
	Summary	29
10	ePortfolios and the Law: What you and your organisation should know	31
	Objective	31
10.1	Introduction	31
10.2	Data Protection, Privacy and Confidentiality	32

10.3	Ownership and use of information in ePortfolios	33
10.4	Misuse of ePortfolio Systems by Learners	34
10.5	User Accessibility, Disabilities Discrimination, and other Social Inclusion Policies	34
	Summary	35
11	The ePortfolio and Pedagogy	36
	Objective	36
	Summary	40
12	Youth Work Theory and the ePortfolio	41
	Objective	41
12.1	What does it mean to be young or/ and adult?	41
12.2	Youth Work and Adult Education	42
12.3	Youth Work and the ePortfolio	42
13	Using an ePortfolio to help young adults enter the world of work	44
	Objective	44
13.1	The ePortfolio in helping young adults enter the world of work	44
13.2	The position of the tutor	44
13.3	The ePortfolio and the learner	45
	Conclusions.....	45

Glossary of terms

accreditation	Official recognition or approval of achievement (i.e Certificate)
bandwidth	The rate of data transfer over the internet or other media
blog	A weblog or on-line diary
Careerswales online	Welsh national ePortfolio service www.careerswales.com
communities of practice	Refers to the process of social learning that occurs when people who have a common interest in some subject or problem collaborate over an extended period to share ideas, find solutions, and build innovations
content	Data that you will put into an ePortfolio
copyright	The legal right to control the production and selling of images, film, music etc.
counsellor	A person who is trained to listen to people and give them advice
data	Files, text, image etc
data protection	The control of the flow of information about an individual
elgg	An open-source online ePortfolio tool (elgg.org)
empowerment	Something that gives people confidence and a feeling of control over their life (literally gives one power)
ePortfolio service provider	An organisation (often a company) providing an ePortfolio tool
ePortfolio	(See Chapter 2 for definitions)
ePortfolio tool	Software or web services enabling one to develop an ePortfolio
hosting	To provide the computer hardware and software which enables a website to exist on the Internet
ICT	Information communication technologies
induction	Initiation (initial training)
internet	The large system of connected computers around the world which allows people to share information and communicate with each other using email etc
IPR	Intellectual property rights
key competencies or skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • communication in mother tongue • communication in a second language • mathematical literacy and basic competences in science and technology • ICT skills • learning-to-learn • interpersonal and civic competences • entrepreneurship • cultural awareness (and expression)
KEYPAL	A European project funded by the Grundtvig programme of



	the European Commission (see Chapter 2)
learner	A person who is engaged in the learning process
learning communities	An advanced kind of educational (or 'pedagogical') grouping in which the participants may be actively engaged in 'peer tutoring' as well as learning.
learning landscape	An environment (often on the web) specifically designed for learning and reflection
(web) link	An address of an internet site starting with http://
LLL	Lifelong learning
mentor	A person who gives another person help and advice over a period of time and often also teaches them how to do their job
multimedia	Using a combination of moving and still pictures, sound, music and words, especially in computers or entertainment
navigate	The action of moving around a website or between websites
netiquette	Conventions or standards of politeness when using mailing lists, and other electronic forums such as internet message boards
netcitizens	Or "cybercitizens" are persons actively involved in online communities
password	A secret code chosen by a user to access personal information
pedagogy	The study of the methods and activities of teaching
product	A tangible output or result (i.e. work assignment, CV...)
reflection	Serious and careful thought
register	An administrative process required to gain access to a (web) tool or service. This usually involves entering personal information (name, email etc) to be then given access to the tool or service.
scaffolding	The provision of sufficient supports (templates, resources, guidance...) to promote learning when concepts and skills are being first introduced to students (often called instructional scaffolding)
Skill-up	http://www.skillupnow.net
skill	An ability
social software	Enables people to rendezvous, connect or collaborate through computer-mediated communication and to form online communities (weblogs, instant messages,, wikis, forums etc...)
socio-cultural	Social and cultural
tutor	A teacher or trainer who works with one student or a small group of students
username	A name or other word that you sometimes need to type in, together with a password, before you are allowed to use a computer, internet service or ePortfolio tool
valorisation	The process of giving value to something: promotion or exploitation of results

web	Or the world wide web (www): hypertext system that operates over the internet, used for serving web pages and transferring files
workflow	The movement of documents and/or tasks through a work process
young adult	Person in the age group 16 to 25 years

Sources: Wikipedia, Cambridge Dictionaries on-line and EIFEL

1 Foreword

Welcome to this ***Tutor Guide to ePortfolios*** developed as part of the KEPAL project (2004- 2006) under the European Commission's Grundtvig programme. During the project, and in particular through the ePortfolio pilots carried out in six different EU countries with over 75 young adults, we came to important conclusions about the likely training needs of tutors wishing to introduce ePortfolios to young people needing to gain key skills for employment.

These needs range from how to put in place and work with the necessary technology, to the relationship between the ePortfolio and pedagogy and the relationship between the ePortfolio and youth-work theory. Some chapters are written specifically for tutors, while other chapters address whole-organisation matters in which tutors play a part.

This Tutor Guide is not therefore simply a manual but is intentionally eclectic, a rich source of information about an emerging new culture and field. We trust you will find it practical, interesting and invaluable.

Bonnie Dudley Edwards and Angela Baker, Editors

October 2006

2 Introduction to KEYPAL

AUTHOR: Angela Baker (EIFEL)

Objective

The aim of the KEYPAL project was to establish the relevance and potential impact of the ePortfolio on the development and assessment of key skills (basic skills / key competencies), a critical issue for Europe. KEYPAL explored how the ePortfolio can support and valorise self-managed learning and development for the acquisition of key skills. We also examined the ability of the ePortfolio to support young adults in interacting with all the actors that can contribute to their development and learning (careers centres, employers, training organisations etc).

The main activity of the project was the ePortfolio pilots carried out in six different EU countries (see partner list below). Partners have used a variety of ePortfolio tools (elgg, Careerswales online, blog tools, Skill-up portfolio) in a variety of settings: second chance schools, youth centres, drop-in day centres... with the common aim of exploring how the development of an ePortfolio can contribute to enabling young adults develop, acquire and valorise key skills.

2.1 Project Resources

To accompany the pilots the partners developed a number of useful resources which are now available from the project website: <http://www.eife-l.org/activities/projects/keypal>. These resources include:

1. An online ePortfolio user guide

This guide is targeted at young adults who are creating their first ePortfolio and is relevant for use with any ePortfolio tool.

2. A key skills self-evaluation questionnaire

This questionnaire has been drawn up as a tool to help learners measure their progress in key skills whilst developing their ePortfolio.

3. The document you are now reading, which is a tutor guide to accompanying young adults in developing their ePortfolio

This is meant as an easy reference guide for tutors accompanying young adults in developing their ePortfolio. The guide has been drawn up by the project partners based on their experience in both youth work and in developing ePortfolios with young adults within the project pilots. We are also grateful for the collaboration of two external experts in legal issues from the CILT at the University of Bristol, Anna Grant (née Home) and Andrew Charlesworth.

4. A list of recommendations for ePortfolio tool providers, implementers and policy makers further to the experience gained in the KEYPAL pilots.

You can also request access on-line to the Pilot Evaluation Report which summarise the outcomes of the six pilot groups: the challenges, successes

2.2 KEYPAL Partners

KEYPAL was a two-year project (Oct 2004 to Oct 2006) funded under the European Commission's Grundtvig programme and was co-ordinated by the European Institute for eLearning (EIfEL).

The project partners:

- Ecole de la Deuxième Chance de Seine St Denis (FR). Piloting ePortfolios with young adults at the Second Chance school
- Edinburgh University Settlement (UK). Piloting ePortfolios with adults with disabilities
- Careers Wales North West (UK). Piloting ePortfolios with young adults in Wales through the Youth Gateway programme
- The MRS Consultancy Ltd (UK). Pilot evaluation activities
- Slovenian Institute for Adult Education (SI). Piloting ePortfolios with young adults in five PLYA youth centres throughout Slovenia
- Deutsches Rotes Kreuz, Kreisverband Bremen, e.V. (DE). Piloting ePortfolios with young adults outside the German dual system of training and education
- PaperFree Systems Ltd (UK). An ePortfolio tool provider
- Yinternet (CH). Piloting ePortfolios with young adults in Switzerland

2.3 What is an ePortfolio?

Within this document and the KEYPAL project we will consistently use the term 'ePortfolio'. However, ePortfolios (or e-portfolios) are also known as 'electronic' or 'digital' portfolios, 'webfolios' and even 'on-line personal development plans'.

Here are two well-accepted definitions of ePortfolios:

An ePortfolio is a cohesive, powerful, and well-designed collection of electronic documents that demonstrate your skills, education, professional development, and the benefits you offer to a target reader. An e-portfolio can be seen as a type of learning record that provides actual evidence of achievement. (Source: Wikipedia)

An ePortfolio is a collection of authentic and diverse evidence, drawn from a larger archive, that represents what a person or organization has learned over time, on which the person or organization has reflected, designed for presentation to one or more audiences for a particular rhetorical purpose (Source: Educause 2003)

It is important to remember that an ePortfolio is best defined by its purpose, i.e. the objective for which the ePortfolio owner has developed his or her ePortfolio. An ePortfolio developed for the purpose of finding a job may be quite different from an ePortfolio developed for personal reflection on one's own work or professional practice. This is why you shouldn't get too worried about definitions but instead explore the potential of the portfolio concept for your own specific personal and professional needs. Read on!

3 What Skills, Knowledge and Attitudes does an ePortfolio tutor need?

AUTHOR: Bonnie Dudley Edwards (EUS)

Objective

Introducing ePortfolios as a support for young people's personal and skills development is obviously not something to be done off the top of your head. Your success will depend on such factors as your professional and educational background, your personal qualities, your tutoring approach, the support from your organisation, and your support for the principles of learning by portfolio.

3.1 Your professional and educational background

You may be a teacher or social worker with a degree from a college or university, or a youth worker with relevant certification. On the other hand you may be a volunteer with experience as a classroom or community-work practitioner (community work is based on a social practice model of adult education, where people learn through collective interaction: thus you may have been, say, a volunteer football coach who helped young people with numeracy skills through score-keeping procedures). You may be a counsellor/mentor to young people. Whatever your professional and educational background, you will need to have a working familiarity with the uses of a personal computer and the Internet (ICT skills).

3.2 Your personal qualities

Your personal qualities are crucial, especially where you are going to be tutoring young people who may feel at risk of failure. Empathy, optimism, spontaneity, non-judgmental and tolerant attitudes, the ability to provide moral support, and the resourcefulness to use situations as learning experiences are all important.

3.3 Your tutoring approach

- You will need **socio-cultural group skills**, in particular if you are working with a group of young people who do not all come from the same ethnic, linguistic and cultural background.
- Young people need to know that the contents of their ePortfolios are under their own control, so **negotiate with learners in advance the learning styles and the learning materials to be used** to develop their ePortfolios.
- Be aware of the **variety of different learning styles young people might wish to use**, for instance, learning by doing; by trial and error; by listening and taking notes; by thinking something through. Support each learner's own best ways of learning.

- You will need to be able to **seek out and be responsible for a variety of different learning materials** that may help young people develop the contents of their ePortfolio. It's not a good idea to provide the same material, such as a standard worksheet, for everyone.
- Be a **team player able to share good practice** with those around you and with other members of your organisation.
- Be a confident performer who enjoys learning and makes learning fun for young people, but stay aware of your **role as their friend**. In working with young people, you need the ability to **engage with them**, not simply stage a performance for them.

Most of all, you will need **enthusiasm for ePortfolios**! Please don't tell us you are embarking on the mission of supporting young people to develop their own ePortfolios without having developed an ePortfolio yourself. You can find information on getting started with an ePortfolio, and on which ePortfolio tool might be your best choice, from Chapter 4 of this Guide. The Key-PAL User Guide is also available to support you in this task.

3.4 Your support for the principles of learning by portfolio

Have a look at what traditions exist, if any, in your experience and in your organisation, of evidencing competence, or things learned, by portfolio. Portfolio approaches are known to **enhance personal development**, as typically they are used as an **instrument of reflection** on one's own performance, experience and identity.

A portfolio approach enables learning to be individualised. A young person's **individual learning plan** can be built around the specific intention to use an ePortfolio; conversely, if an individual learning plan does not already exist, the objectives of developing an ePortfolio can constitute such a plan. For young people who may feel alienated from society, a portfolio approach, and the chance to discuss the contents of their ePortfolios with you as they build these ePortfolios up, can be a healing and liberating force.

On a more practical level, a portfolio can be useful for **tracking improvements in skills**. There is a great deal of freedom as to what might go into an ePortfolio.

A **philosophical justification** for the portfolio approach is that learners' reflection on their own learning fosters **learner autonomy**. For more information on this subject, please see Chapter 11 of this Guide.

3.5 Support from your organisation








































You should be able to count on the support of your organisation in providing you with a **suitable learning culture** and a **suitable e-culture** to work in. There should be people you can go to for **support in the implementation** of ePortfolios and in designing, constructing, and managing learning and training environments. Identify these people within your organisation and try to collaborate with them on a regular basis (see Chapter 4 on implementation within your organisation).


































Summary

In this chapter we have outlined the main skills areas in which you will need to feel competent before introducing ePortfolios to young adults, as well as highlighting some of the personal qualities and attitudes that you should have in order to ensure the success of your ePortfolio implementation. You may not yet have acquired all these skills and attitudes, so complete the following self-perception questionnaire to help identify those areas in which you may need to seek support from your organisation and possible further training:

3.6 Self –perception questionnaire

How I feel about my skills, knowledge and attitudes as an ePortfolio Tutor working with young people

	Question			
	My professional and educational background			
1	I have adequate prior experience of work with young people in order to introduce to them a complex new concept such as the ePortfolio			
2	I am confident in the use of a personal computer and the Internet			
	My personal qualities			
3	I am empathetic			
4	I am optimistic			
5	I can be spontaneous			
6	I am non-judgmental and tolerant			
7	I can provide moral support when needed			
8	I am resourceful in using situations as learning experiences			
	My tutoring approach			
9	I have socio-cultural group skills			
10	I can negotiate in advance with learners the learning styles they will use to develop their ePortfolios			
11	I can recommend suitable materials to complement these learning styles			
12	I can name and describe a variety of learning styles young people might wish to use to develop their			

	ePortfolios			
13	I can seek out a variety of different learning materials and be responsible for their use with young people			
14	I am a good tutoring-team player who gives and receives good-practice knowledge			
15	I can engage meaningfully with young people			
16	I am enthusiastic about ePortfolios			
	My support for the principles of learning by portfolio			
17	I support the concept of the reflective learner			
18	I can work productively with a learner to create that learner's individual learning/portfolio plan			
19	I can work productively with a learner to track, through portfolio evidence, improvements in that learner's skills			
20	I am familiar with philosophical justifications for the portfolio approach			
	Support from my organisation			
21	I work happily and effectively within my organisation's learning culture/training environment			
22	My organisation's e-culture is suitable for my work with young people and ePortfolios as regards both knowledge about eLearning and adequate provision of equipment, technology, and technology support			
23	I know whom to contact within my organization for advice about ePortfolios			

4 How to get started with your ePortfolio project as an organisation

AUTHOR: Angela Baker (ElfEL)

Step 1: Decide on the objectives of your ePortfolio project

This very first step in planning your ePortfolio project is, without a doubt, the most crucial, and should not be neglected. It is essential to have a **common objective or strategy** for the ePortfolio within your organisation, even if individuals may use the ePortfolio in different contexts and ways.

Even if you are the person initiating the ePortfolio project, it is unlikely that you will be the only person involved in its implementation and roll-out. It is advisable to **set up a small focus group or Steering group** that can meet regularly to reflect on, and make decisions on, both the strategic and implementation issues. It is a good idea to bring colleagues **from different backgrounds** into this group so that you are sure all perspectives are taken into consideration, i.e. a tutor, a student, a technician, a careers advisor (or similar), a member of the management team etc.

Some of the initial questions you need to answer together are the following:

- What problems are you hoping to solve with the ePortfolio?
- What added-value are you expecting from implementing the ePortfolio, from a pedagogical, organisational, logistical, or strategic point of view?
- In what way do you expect the ePortfolio to enrich the students' learning/professional experience or improve their career opportunities?
- Who will have an ePortfolio and how will it be used?
- What resources do you have to support the ePortfolio project (staffing, technical, financial etc)?

Step 2: Decide on the contents of your ePortfolio

Before deciding which ePortfolio tool to use, you need a good idea of the type of content/structure you would like your ePortfolio to have. You may have to compromise later if the tool you choose does not fit exactly your expectations, but you should keep your vision as wide as possible at the start.

Some of the questions you need to answer within your steering group are:

- What content (or items) should be included in the ePortfolio (CV, work assignments etc)?
- What form should this content take, i.e. text files, video and audio files?
- Should there be pre-defined categories for the content? If so, which?
- Should users put content in their ePortfolios in a specific format, i.e. using templates?

You may find it useful to draw up a list of the different items of content you would like the users to be able to put into their ePortfolio, indicating any specific format it should take (free text, template, pdf or word files, audio etc) and to categorise this content if relevant.

For example:

Category: Careers

Content:

- CV (pdf file)
- Personal statement (free text)
- Career goals (template)

Once you have agreed on the main content items make a list in a table.

Step 3: Decide on the access levels and rights for the ePortfolio

Now that you have decided on the content (items) you would like to include in your ePortfolio, you will need to decide on the different access rights you will give to this content. You will need to discuss with your steering group members the following issues:

- Who will be able to create, edit, view this content?
- What will the workflow be for the different sections/content and users of the ePortfolio?

To do this we advise you to draw up an access matrix using as a starting point the list of content items agreed on in Step 2.

This matrix shows along the top (X axis) the different actors who may have access to a user's ePortfolio in one way or another, and down the side (Y axis) the different content items in the ePortfolio.

Building your ePortfolio content and access matrix:

1. The Y Axis – ePortfolio Content

You should list in the first column (the Y axis) the content or different items you would like to see included in the ePortfolio (as done in Step 2).

2. The X Axis – ePortfolio Actors

You should indicate along the top line (the X axis) the different actors who will have some form of access to the ePortfolio or its parts. Consider whether they may only have access to some of the content, or ePortfolio sections, and whether what they can do with the content to which they do have access will also vary.

3. The Matrix Boxes – ePortfolio Access

You should indicate in the matrix boxes the access that each actor will be given to each item of the ePortfolio, using the following access levels:

Editor: It may be that only the user (ePortfolio owner) can actually edit the contents (items or assets) of his or her ePortfolio, but even then not necessarily all of it. For example, you may not want your users to be able to edit tutor comments or evaluations. For all those items that you wish one of the actors to be able to edit (i.e. create, edit and post) you should indicate 'E' in the relevant box of the matrix.

Contributor: You may want tutors to have the right to contribute content in the form of comments, evaluations etc, but without having the possibility of editing existing content in the ePortfolio. This needs to be decided from the start, so indicate with a 'C' the items you wish the different actors to be able to contribute to, e.g. post their own content in the form of comments, documents etc.

Reader: You may want to give other actors the possibility of viewing parts of the ePortfolio, e.g. a future employer may be given viewing or reader access to the user’s CV, Personal Statement, work placement reports and profile. In this case indicate with an ‘R’ the items the different actors can read, but cannot edit or post to.

There may be some parts of the ePortfolio which can be made public, i.e. are visible to anybody who has the URL of the ePortfolio. However, you need to be careful about **data protection issues** here (see chapter 10 of this Guide), as you do not want your students publishing content for which your organisation will be liable. It is advisable to make the public parts readable only and not editable. Users may want to enable the wider public to post comments to their ePortfolio – but how this will be handled needs to be decided in advance.

Administrator: For technical reasons you might give administrative rights to the person (technician, administrator) managing the ePortfolio system. Depending on the tool you choose, and on where the data is hosted, this may be someone in your organisation or someone at your ePortfolio service-provider agency.

	Private		Restricted		Public
Access	Student	Tutor	Organisation (management or admin)	Employer or assessor	Public access
Categories					
Profile					
Learning Log					
Work in progress					
Completed work					
Work placement reports					
Assessment assignments					
CV					
Evaluations					
Personal statement					

E = Editor
 C = Contributor
 R = Reader
 A = Administrator

Once you have completed such a matrix you may want to validate it by **creating some ePortfolio user scenarios**. A scenario is a means of describing (in the form of step-by-step story-telling) the desired use of the ePortfolio from a particular user’s perspective.

You could ask each member of your steering group to do this from their own particular perspective, e.g. the tutor will write how they wish to use the ePortfolio for a specific purpose such as evaluating a student’s progress throughout the year.

Gathering several user scenarios will help you clarify the purpose(s) of your ePortfolio project, and help clarify the requirements for implementation and success. You can find out more about scenario planning at:

http://scenariothinking.org/wiki/index.php/Main_Page

Step 4: Choosing your ePortfolio tool

Now that you have a clear idea of the purpose and content of your planned ePortfolio you are ready to go ahead and choose an ePortfolio tool. You have several options when choosing an ePortfolio tool:

- a commercial tool provided by an ePortfolio provider
- an open source tool that you adapt to your own needs
- development of your own ePortfolio tool (home –grown tool)

In order to help you choose the ePortfolio tool that is best suited for your project, you need to consider the following resource issues:

1. Budget:

No ePortfolio project comes free, regardless of the solution you choose. You have already spent time in Steps 1 and 2 planning this project, and this time has a cost. Before choosing your tool you need to estimate the resources (both financial and staffing) that you can allocate to this project, in consultation with your management.

2. Technical expertise:

It is important to consult with your technical staff to find out what time and expertise they can dedicate to this project, particularly if you are thinking of an open source solution, or developing your own tool. Both these options will require specific technical expertise, as well as considerable effort, on their behalf. Ideally, you should have involved your technician in your steering group so that he is part of the decision process.

3. Hosting facilities:

Whether you opt for a commercial, open source, or home-grown solution, you need to know if your organisation is capable of, and willing to, host the ePortfolio data. There may also be legal issues to consider when deciding on who hosts the data (see Chapter 10 for more details).

4. Information System Integration (openness of the ePortfolio tool regarding your information systems):

Whether you opt for a commercial, open source or home-grown solution, you need to know what kind of data exchange (learner information) or specific functionalities (SSO) you need between your internal systems (LMS¹, CMS, VLE...) and the ePortfolio tool. In the same way it is important to check with your internal technical staff whether your chosen language (PHP, Java, .Net, Python...) or open technology (Web services, API²...) in the ePortfolio system can easily be managed or adapted.

5. Interoperability (standards supported by the ePortfolio tool):

Whether you opt for a commercial, open source or home-grown solution, you need to specify, in case of internal IS integration or to link with external systems (job board...), what kind of standards you need to provide in your ePortfolio tool (personal data: IMS, HR-XML; online feeds: RSS, Atom, FOAF...).

¹ Learning Management System (LMS); Content Management System (CMS) Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)

² Application Profile Interface

Step 5: Implementing the ePortfolio tool

1. Trial the ePortfolio first with a small group of users

Once you have chosen your ePortfolio tool, and have adapted it as necessary, you should trial it first with a small group of users. This allows you to check for possible bugs, and also to get rapid feedback about possible improvements and refinements. It is also advisable to trial the ePortfolio with the members of your steering group, and the tutors (implementers) who will be involved in the project, so that they are familiar with the tool before coaching others.

2. Organise a thorough induction session

Induction is essential to the success of your ePortfolio project. You will probably decide to do several induction sessions, i.e. one for tutors/implementers and then one with students. These induction sessions should be very well prepared, from both a pedagogical and a technical point of view. If users come across problems with the ePortfolio tool at the start, or do not understand its purpose, they are likely to be rapidly disillusioned.

3. Allocate time and resources for ePortfolio development

It is essential to allow adequate time for users to develop their ePortfolio, and to allocate sufficient resources to allow them do so (access to PC and Internet, tutor support etc), preferably on a regular basis (daily, weekly). For your ePortfolio project to be successful you should try to integrate it with current practices and adapt your methodologies as appropriate.

4. Organise regular feedback or review sessions

You can't expect to get it all right the first time! Organise regular feedback or review sessions with the ePortfolio users, encouraging them to provide comments as to the strong and weak points of the ePortfolio tool and the benefits/drawbacks of its use within your particular context. Make sure that your steering group then acts on this feedback, to improve the ePortfolio for all.

Summary

In this chapter we have outlined the necessity to plan your ePortfolio project strategically. We have recommended that you set up a steering group to:

- Decide on the objectives and goals of the ePortfolio
- Agree on the content and structure of the ePortfolio
- Decide on the access rights to ePortfolio parts or content
- Choose the most suitable ePortfolio tool
- Oversee the implementation of the ePortfolio project from induction sessions through to user feedback sessions

5 How to get started with the ePortfolio development as a tutor

AUTHOR: Sarah Jones-Morris (CWNW)

Objective

Whether you've used ePortfolios before or not, this chapter will give you some top tips to help you:

- prepare yourself for guiding young people through the process of setting up an ePortfolio
- deal with some of the practical issues

5.1 Useful resources

A number of useful resources are available to help you start using ePortfolios with young people. These include:

- **KEYPAL ePortfolio User Guide** for young people – short chapters written in simple language and available on the web
- Detailed **KEYPAL ePortfolio User Guide** – provides more detailed information for tutors and professionals
- **Learner's Self perception questionnaire** 'How I feel about my (key) skills' – to be completed at the start of the process and at the end by the young adults. This questionnaire can help measure the 'distance travelled' by the young person in their perception of their skills. You should also try the **self perception questionnaire for tutors** in Chapter 3 of this guide to check you are ready to start!

These documents are available in English, French, German, Slovenian and Welsh.

5.2 Prepare yourself

- Be clear in your mind what you are hoping to get out of the process. What will the **young people's goal** be in creating their ePortfolio?
- Choose the **ePortfolio tool** you will be using. It will make the process easier if all the young people are using the same tool.
- **Create your own ePortfolio** to familiarize your self with the tool and with the process of creating an ePortfolio.
- Note **key competences or skills** to be focused on when using the ePortfolio
- Consider **amending the learner's self perception questionnaire** 'How I feel about my skills' so that it just includes the questions on the key competences or skills you are focusing on. This will give you a measure of how far the young people have travelled by the end of the process. This is called **impact measurement**.

- **Familiarize** yourself with the young people's 'ePortfolio User Guide', the detailed 'User Guide' and this 'Tutor Guide'.
- **Make sure** you have access to computers and that they are available when you need them. Are there enough computers for all your young people? If you are using a web-based ePortfolio tool, have computers got reliable internet access?
- **Plan** how you are going to run the sessions with young people and what they are going to be doing. Over what time period? How often? How many tutors/mentors required per group?

5.3 Prepare your young people to start their ePortfolio

- **Set a clear goal** or goals – make sure the young people know why they are creating their ePortfolio and how it can help them.
- Introduce them to the '**User guide**' – in particular chapters 1-4.
- Work through the '**How I feel about my skills**' questionnaire with the young people before they start. They will need to complete this at the end of the process as well.
- Find out how computer literate your group is, i.e. **how much support** with the technical aspects they will need. Can they use the internet? Can they use email? Have they got keyboard skills? Can you or someone else provide the support needed?

Now you should be ready to start!

5.4 Accessing the ePortfolio tool

Most ePortfolio tools require users to register before accessing their own space. The first time young people access the ePortfolio tool they may have difficulties. To help you could:

- Use a visual aid, such as a PowerPoint presentation, so that you can 'walk them through' it and students can see what they need to do
- Prepare the computers just before the session starts so the tool is already open on the registration page
- Have handouts of key screen-shots ready for easy reference
- Invite learners who have experience with the ePortfolio tool (if any) to pair up with less confident learners

5.5 Registering young people

This will probably take longer than you think! Young people will need to input their **personal details** to register. Depending on the tool this could include:

- their full name
- full postal address - including postcode or zip code
- telephone or mobile phone number
- email address (they will probably need one)

They will also need to:

- choose a user name
- choose a password

It is a good idea **to ensure that the young people have all their personal details** with them on the day they are registering. Previous experience has shown that young people may need a lot of support to help them input their personal details correctly. You may need additional tutor/mentor support for this session.

User names and passwords – another common problem is young people losing or forgetting their username and/or password. Possible solutions include:

- keeping a list of user names and passwords so that you have them available if necessary
- if young people already have a user name and password to use your computer system, they could use the same ones for their ePortfolio

5.6 Introducing the ePortfolio tool to young people

Spend the first session just showing the group:

- how to navigate around the tool
- the main features of the tool
- some real examples of ePortfolios, if possible

Give everybody enough time to 'have a play' with the tool. Spending this time at the beginning will save a lot of time later on!

Finally, make sure that young people have all the help and support they need while creating their ePortfolio.

Summary

This chapter has provided practical advice to help you start the process of using ePortfolios with young people, including:

- the importance of setting goals for the young people
- the need to create your own ePortfolio
- the practical issues and problems you may come across
- the useful resources available to help you.

6 Tutor – Learner Interaction: Supporting and facilitating ePortfolio-based learning

AUTHOR: Katharina Kracht (DRK)

Objective

The concepts of **autonomous learning** and the **independence of the learner** are basic to work with the ePortfolio. However, this does not mean that the tutor is not important in the learning process. This chapter highlights the different roles you as tutor will have to take on in supporting and facilitating learners to develop their own ePortfolios.

Recent thought in education underlines the benefits of giving the learner optimal autonomy. Educators have thus seen a shift in the teacher's or tutor's role, with some going so far as to see the teacher as a **service provider** who assists when requested by the learner. This might work well for some students; however, many learners may need the presence and support of a tutor, even if they don't specifically request it or realise it! Here we will underline the role of the tutor in the learning process for a large majority of learners.

6.1 The roles of the tutor in supporting ePortfolio development

The tutor's tasks and roles in supporting learners to develop their ePortfolio are wide ranging. Amongst other things, tutors are needed as

- **Motivators:** to give learners a sense of how an ePortfolio can benefit them and why they should have one
- **Stimulators:** to start learners off in developing the contents of their ePortfolios and to encourage them to update them
- **Facilitators:** to support the learners in the process of reflecting, selecting and evidencing their skills and competences
- **Administrators:** to manage and keep track of learners' personal data and registration details, helping them with any IT problems, and, where appropriate, monitoring and moderating the contents of their ePortfolios

You will need to give your learners support on many levels during the ePortfolio process, as described in more detail below.

6.2 Providing a suitable learning environment

Some learners might work on their ePortfolio **from home or elsewhere**. But learners will often come together to work on their ePortfolios **in groups** or in more traditional **classroom settings**. It is the tutor's responsibility to facilitate the learners' work. What does this entail?

- You should do your best to provide a suitable physical environment in which people with disabilities (learning and physical) have full access to all facilities.

- Learners with few ICT skills might need more support, so organise the environment to allow the more expert users to support the less expert.
- Create a 'no blame' culture where learners feel at ease in expressing difficulties, making mistakes and requesting help.
- Encourage learners to cooperate and work together, sharing their skills and ePortfolio contents, and providing each other with feedback.

Of course, you can't always choose the learning environment that you think would be the best for your learners – there are always limits, perhaps due to limited space, IT infrastructure or funding.

However, a tutor should work with the aim of achieving the **inclusion of all their learners**. These measures are important in order to avoid broadening the "digital divide", as they help ensure that people are included, rather than excluded, by the use of computers and the internet.

6.3 Selecting a suitable ePortfolio tool for your learners

There are a large number of ePortfolio tools currently available. Your organisation may have pre-selected a tool, or this task may be left up to you as a tutor. Learners may also have a preference for a tool and you should be sensitive to this. For more advice on choosing an ePortfolio tool please see Chapter 4.

6.4 Supporting learners in developing the contents of their ePortfolio

The content of the learners' ePortfolios will depend on the overall objective you have set out for their ePortfolio project. It may be to:

- develop and showcase their skills
- present themselves to a future employer
- assess their progress or provide them with an environment in which they can reflect on their learning and collect their thoughts

Whatever the main purpose is, you can be sure that learners will need support in developing the content of their ePortfolio. Here are a few suggestions as to how you can get them started:

- Have a '**model**' ePortfolio or sample ePortfolios (it could be your own ePortfolio) to give the learners an idea of what the contents of an ePortfolio should look like. You should also try to showcase the learners' ePortfolios throughout the process so that other learners can be stimulated by what their peers have done.
- Provide your learners with a **structure** for their ePortfolio. This could be in the form of headings (list of topics, questions, skills etc) or a template which they apply to their ePortfolio. Of course you may have chosen an ePortfolio tool that already provides a structure and, if so, in most cases you should be able to revise or customise this structure to suit your own needs.
- Make learners' ePortfolio development part of their **everyday practice**. For example, encourage them to put finished work (assignments of similar) in their ePortfolio systematically, as well as using their ePortfolio for archiving photos/videos

of their activities (make sure they are suitable ones!). When doing group activities encourage students to write up their thoughts and ideas in their ePortfolio after the activity. Basically, encourage them to have a 'reflex ePortfolio' in all their learning activities.

6.5 Helping young people to judge their skills realistically

- Many young people who wish to prove their key skills with an ePortfolio have difficulties assessing **their own skills adequately**. Because they don't have a realistic image of their own skills, they often tend to consider themselves **either perfect or useless** at a given skill.
- You can help them to see their skills in a **realistic light**, so that the presentation in the ePortfolio represents the learner's skills adequately.
- Go through the **self-perception questionnaire** with each individual learner (if you can) and encourage them to reflect on their skills and to provide evidence to support their judgements. You may then ask them to record these skills (from the questionnaire) in their ePortfolio and to provide digital evidence (photos, video, testimonies...) for each skill.

6.6 Supporting young people's interaction via the Internet when developing their ePortfolios

The internet offers access to all sorts of information. Learners might not always be able to make an adequate selection.

- They might face the problem of **sites with content** opposed to the idea of human rights, human dignity, racial and gender equality. Although you might not be in total control of this situation, you nevertheless need to be prepared to deal with this issue, on the level of individual conversations, as well as in a group setting.
- You may need to help learners **filter** the information on the internet and you need to facilitate their critical reception of all sorts of information.
- The internet as a medium should be part of the group discussion. Learners should thus be empowered to reflect on their **own contribution to this medium**, on how they present themselves and which information they wish to make available to others.
- Keep learners aware that the content of their ePortfolio should always be **appropriate** for its viewers, or readers, who could be future employers, assessors, parents etc.

Summary

This chapter has outlined the role of the tutor as that of a **supporter and facilitator** who helps the learner to take steps they might not be able to take when working independently, always with the idea in mind that the learner's competent and independent interaction with the ePortfolio is the ultimate aim of the process.

7 Feel comfortable on the information highways

AUTHORS: Raphaël Rousseau and Théo Bondolfi (Yinternet.org)

Objective

As the Internet is a young medium, some of your learners may not understand the differences between older media and the more recent electronic ones, such as email, web publishing etc. In this chapter we will try to help you understand these differences yourself, so that you can then support your learners in doing the same.

The first things you probably learnt when using a computer were:

- how to use the keyboard and the mouse
- perhaps how to play computer games (if you didn't, your learners will have!)
- how to use basic office software, such as a word processor and a spreadsheet

However, when using the internet (whether it be via email or web pages) you will be interacting directly with other users, and therefore you need to know the basics about how things work there so as to behave appropriately.

7.1 Advice when using the Internet and web-based ePortfolios

- **Code of conduct:** informal guidelines called 'netiquette' exist for web users and may be of help to you. You can find out more about the rules of netiquette online in the Wikipedia at the following links:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Netiquette> or www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html

which have a list of simple rules. For more details, go to the links referenced at the end of this chapter. Print out the guidelines and try to explain them to your learners and encourage them to follow them – and of course, you should practice what you preach!

- **Cultural differences:** remember that viewers of your ePortfolio may be very different from yourself. For instance, they may be a member of a different religion, gender, ethnic origin, nationality, or sexual orientation. They may speak a different language, or belong to a different age group. They may perhaps have some physical or mental disability. You should take these factors into consideration when putting content on the web (i.e. in your ePortfolio) and be sensitive to the feelings of others. Be particularly **careful with humour**. What you regard as a joke may be considered insulting or disrespectful by others.
- **Respecting time and bandwidth:** as your learners will interact with other web users (through chat tools, forums etc), encourage them to respect other people's time and not to disturb other people unnecessarily with messages. They should also understand that not all viewers of their ePortfolios (and emails) will have a high bandwidth, so they should try not to post large files that will take someone with a dial-up connection a long time to download.
- **Culture of sharing:** don't hesitate to share your knowledge. If someone has a particular expertise or knowledge, they should where appropriate be encouraged to share it with other netcitizens, via their ePortfolio.

- **Respecting Privacy:** we all should respect other people's privacy. Don't put other people's information or information relating to them in an ePortfolio without asking their permission beforehand. Developing an ePortfolio also means developing a consciousness of the boundaries between private and public life.
- **Traceability:** as *Words Fly Away and Writings Remain*, anything on the internet can be recorded or saved (cached), so chose your words carefully. Deleting text and files does not guarantee that they have not been saved somewhere else on the web - do be careful!
- **Context:** be careful when giving **context around** information (i.e. author, date, location, targeted audience). Some words are to be avoided like *tomorrow* or *next weekend*, which are relative dates. Don't forget always to give the year in the dates; it's such a shame to read outdated content speaking about *next month* when this refers to events of several months ago.
- **Use the web, but don't duplicate it.** When you can, **don't copy and paste content from the web, but make links** in order to avoid duplicating information.

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8 The link between the ePortfolio and key-skills development

AUTHORS: Théo Bondolfi and Raphaël Rousseau (Yinternet.org)

Objective

The objective of this chapter is to illustrate the way in which the development of an ePortfolio enables and facilitates both the acquisition and demonstration of key skills. This will be shown by giving examples of the tasks and activities involved in the ePortfolio development process and showing how these tasks and activities relate to each of the key skills. This will enable you as a tutor to identify more easily the means by which your learners can develop and demonstrate their key skills through the ePortfolio process, and will help you in evaluating the ePortfolios developed by your learners.

8.1 Linking Key skills to ePortfolio development

In the table below we show how the key skills are developed as part of the process of continued ePortfolio editing and updating. As you will see, developing an ePortfolio not only helps in developing information and communication technology (ICT) skills, but also general aptitudes/skills in everyday life and in the professional world, here called *key skills*.

First column contains the key skills defined by the KEYPAL partners (and adapted from the work of the European Commission's Working Group on Basic Skills, Foreign Language Teaching and Entrepreneurship). These skills are transversal skills for any professional activity.

Second column provides a definition of each key skill.

Third column describes how this skill is acquired (developed and demonstrated) within the ePortfolio production process.

Key Skills	Definition	How is this skill acquired within the ePortfolio development process
Communication in first language	Communication is the ability to express and interpret thoughts, feelings and facts in both oral and written form (listening, speaking, reading and writing), and to interact linguistically in an appropriate way in the full range of societal contexts — work, home and leisure.	<p>Communication in a first language is enhanced in an ePortfolio development process through :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the formulation of sentences to present oneself and the suitability of texts for specific audiences - adhering to the standards and rules of netiquette (see Chapter 7) - participation in virtual communities and forums - verbal expression via use of audio and video content <p>Moreover, spoken communication skills can easily be demonstrated by learners if</p>

Key Skills	Definition	How is this skill acquired within the ePortfolio development process
		tutors get them to develop their public pages for reflecting on their own realities/profile, based on face-to-face interviews with one another (like role playing games).
Communication in a second language	Having communication skills in a second language is where an individual is considered to have the same four skill dimensions (listening, speaking, reading and writing) as communication skills in a first language. However, the level of mastery is not necessarily the same for all four dimensions, and there can be differences between languages.	Communication in a second language is enhanced in an ePortfolio development process through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - formulation of text in the second language as part of the ePortfolio (i.e. in blog, profile...) - research on existing information on the web in various languages, such as reading and posting in the Wikipedia multilingual collaborative encyclopaedia - showing an understanding of an ePortfolio interface in a second language (menus, commands etc) - integration of verbal communication in a second language via audio and/or video content - translation of a CV and any other documents edited in the ePortfolio into a second language
Mathematical literacy and basic competences in science and technology	Mathematical literacy is the ability to use addition, subtraction, multiplication, division and ratios in mental and written computation to solve a range of problems in everyday situations. The emphasis is on process rather than output, on activity rather than knowledge. Science refers to the body of knowledge and methodology employed to explain the natural world. Technology is viewed as the application of that knowledge in order to modify the natural environment in response to perceived human wants or needs.	Mathematical literacy and science and technology competences are developed as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - practices of ePortfolio editing, including various practical experiments such as content editing using self-assessment tools, computer etc -an ePortfolio may also require the learner to evidence mathematical, science and technology (S&T) skills in the form of completed work assignments, write-ups of experiments, reflection on S&T articles etc
ICT skills	ICT skills comprise the use of multi-media technology to retrieve, store, create, present, sort and exchange information.	ePortfolio editing is a process that requires the learner to use multimedia technologies in order to retrieve, store, create, present, sort and exchange information using ICT. Therefore ICT skills are an integral part of ePortfolio development. Some examples of how this is demonstrated are:

Key Skills	Definition	How is this skill acquired within the ePortfolio development process
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - entering data into ePortfolio - uploading files - editing digital content - using an internet browser - presenting content digitally (blog, webpages etc) - classifying data (file repository) - giving privileges for access to content items
Learning-to-learn	<p>Learning to learn is defined as the disposition and ability to organise and regulate one's own learning; to manage one's time effectively; to solve problems; to acquire, process, evaluate and assimilate new knowledge; and to apply new knowledge and skills in a variety of contexts — at home and at work, in education and training.</p>	<p>The process of developing an ePortfolio requires the ability to organise and regulate one's own learning, especially through the following practices :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reflecting on one's achievements, skills and interests - releasing and frequently updating the documents published (ePortfolio content) - asking questions spontaneously to tutors while encountering technical and redactional difficulties/challenges - using ePortfolio in a variety of contexts (employment, self-reflection, peer interaction etc) - carrying out intermediary and final self-assessment before submitting the ePortfolio for certification or evaluation - analysing existing documents on the web and evaluating their quality, for example definition of words, other ePortfolios, in order to become inspired
Interpersonal and civic competences including working with others	<p>Interpersonal competences comprise all forms of behaviour that must be mastered in order that an individual is able to participate in an efficient and constructive way in social life, and to resolve conflict where necessary. Interpersonal skills are necessary for effective interaction on a one-to-one basis or in groups, and are deployed in both the public and private domains to promote effective relationships for working with others.</p>	<p>Writing texts to present oneself is a challenge. This means for example :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the ability to formulate the way in which one presents oneself so as to valorise one's individual qualities and characteristics whilst being careful not to create misunderstanding or generate counter-productive reactions - tailoring one's text/reflections to a specific audience (e.g. employer, tutor, peers, family) - being aware of and adhering to existing licences regulating the uses of images (or other types of intellectual property) - adhering to the web codes of conduct while sharing information through the

Key Skills	Definition	How is this skill acquired within the ePortfolio development process
		internet (by respecting the <i>netiquette</i> – see Chapter 7)
Entrepreneurship	<p>Entrepreneurship has a passive and an active component: it comprises both the propensity to induce changes oneself and the ability to welcome, support and adapt to innovation brought about by external factors.</p> <p>Entrepreneurship involves taking responsibility for one's actions, positive or negative; developing a strategic vision; setting objectives and meeting them; and being motivated to succeed.</p>	<p>By editing an ePortfolio, one goes through a process of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - evaluating one's own identity and life path, which generates motivation to change, evaluate, adopt new attitudes and acquire new skills - adapting oneself to new challenges such as web editing - taking risks, as in presenting one's competences publicly - taking the initiative to innovate, modify existing patterns, test limits, and develop new ways of self-promotion
Cultural awareness	<p>The term 'cultural awareness' comprises an appreciation of popular culture and general social mores, as well as the ability to appreciate literature, art, music and other forms of creative expression.</p>	<p>Cultural awareness is enhanced because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -ePortfolio development requires the learner to adapt to a new world, a new cultural territory called 'cyberspace' which has its own set of rules and language. By developing an ePortfolio, one may gain the keys to information-sharing, confidentiality, collective intelligence (not reinventing the wheel) and creativity-sharing - in writing about their interests, hobbies and activities, learners demonstrate their awareness and appreciation of culture

9 The ePortfolio as a tool for promoting Reflection and Social Construction of Meaning

AUTHOR: Katharina Kracht (DRK)

Objective

This chapter very briefly tells you something about the educational theory that we bring to working with the ePortfolio. This theoretical base can be called **social constructivist**. The chapter explains the **role of reflection** in the learning process and how learners **construct meaning socially** when they work with the ePortfolio, that is, how they make sense of their own learning tasks when they interact with others.

9.1 ePortfolio and reflection

We believe that reflection is a key element of the learning process. The educator John Dewey said, “We do not learn from experience, we learn from reflecting on experience.”

Making the selection of what to put into one’s portfolio and how to represent oneself in the portfolio requires reflection. The portfolio user needs to reflect on:

- their skills
- their products
- their learning experience.

Some of the basic questions portfolio users have to answer are:

- Does my product (evidence, piece of work etc) give a good impression of my abilities? If so, why? If not, why not?
- What are my skills? How would I like to present them?

The user can ask the other learners as well as the tutor for support when answering these questions.

Obviously, nobody wants to present products that seem a substandard representation of what they expect of themselves. This is why the ePortfolio is a great tool in order to foster reflection of one’s own products. We also think that it can contribute to reflecting on one’s own **individual style of learning** and of working.

The ePortfolio user wants to meet some standards. These are usually a combination of standards defined by others – the tutor and the other students – and one’s own standards. If the product does not meet these standards, users will ask themselves:

- What is still missing? How can I close the gap between the standard and what I have achieved?

If a product is good, learners should ask themselves:

- Why is my product good?
- What did I do for it to be so good?
- Which skills did I use?
- How and when will I be able to use these skills again?

Thus ePortfolio users gain a better idea of what their **real skills** are, but also where their **personal difficulties** might lie.

9.2 How can learners reflect on their work using the ePortfolio?

Learners should be asked explicitly to reflect on their learning and on the products they have chosen to put into the portfolio. They need not do this in writing. The **multimedia** environment of the ePortfolio allows for various ways of documenting reflection, for example through **audio or video files**. Learners can reflect their experiences with learning in a dialogic way, one asking the other, or when they verbally present the portfolio to a group of learners.

9.3 Social constructivist approach to ePortfolio learning

Our approach to the portfolio is social constructivist. What does that mean?

- The behaviorist model in education proclaimed that learning is a passive process in which “learning objects” are simply “put” to the learner. However, we are convinced that learning is an **active process**. The learners themselves are active in their learning.
- This process means that learners construct their learning objects by themselves.
- But we are social beings. Without other people around us, we would not learn very much. Therefore we see learning as interaction with others.

9.4 The ePortfolio as a means of communication

In this context, we can view the ePortfolio as a **means of communication**: learners communicate their achievements and put them in a social context. The learner's constructions thus become visible to others.

If the product is presentable and convincing, the reactions of those who view the product will confirm this. This will be a successful communication with the viewers. If the product does not meet the standards of those who view it, and does not facilitate a successful communication with them, they will give the learner feedback. The learner can then engage in revising products in order to communicate more successfully.

Summary

This chapter has summed up some of the educational ideas behind ePortfolio work. We have underlined

- The importance of seeing learning as an active rather than a passive process
- The role of reflection in the learning process and how reflection helps learners assess their own skills more adequately

- The importance of the social world around the individual – although learning is always an individual process, we go through this process in social interaction with the people around us
- The ePortfolio can therefore be seen as a means of communication to the people around us. As such, it provides feedback on our work

10 ePortfolios and the Law: What you and your organisation should know

AUTHORS: Andrew Charlesworth and Anna Grant, Centre for IT and Law (CILT), University of Bristol

Objective

This chapter sets out the basic legal issues that you and your organisation should keep in mind regarding your use of ePortfolios in youth work, including copyright, data protection and accessibility. It also highlights a number of issues and measures that you can use to identify and address those issues that might particularly affect your work.

10.1 Introduction

Across Europe, regardless of the country in which an ePortfolio system is used, a similar set of questions with legal implications tends to need to be considered. These questions are:

- Who owns the information held in the ePortfolio system?
- Who has the right to see and use personal information in the ePortfolio system?
- Who has the right to see and use other valuable information in the ePortfolio system?
- What happens if the ePortfolio system is misused by learners?
- What happens if the ePortfolio system can't be used by certain types of learner because they are disabled, they lack technical skills, or they face cultural barriers?

Which of these questions affects your particular use of an ePortfolio system will depend on factors such as:

- What type of data is collected, stored and used?
- Who apart from the learner is allowed to have access to the data?
- How, and when, can learners make information in their ePortfolio available to others?

The legal issues may already have been considered by your organisation. Most legal issues are best dealt with before ePortfolio systems are rolled out for use with learners. This means that the relevant legal risks can be identified, their impact assessed, and suitable processes and guidance developed to address them. Everyone involved in the development and use of ePortfolio systems, whether they are managers, information technology specialists, or tutors, should take time to **discuss as a team what legal issues the use of the system might raise**.

It is a good idea for organisations to use those discussions to **produce written advice and good practice guidelines**. A successful ePortfolio system may be used for many years, and creating this sort of information will help ensure that future staff and learners can be quickly and effectively advised about the issues. Spending some time thinking about the issues may also help you to spot issues where further advice is required, either from your senior colleagues or from legal advisors - remember that it is better to **ask for any advice you need at an early stage**, rather than later after something has gone wrong.

It is important to remember that laws affecting your work may change over time. Some laws, such as copyright laws and personal data protection laws are changing very rapidly due to the impact of new technologies. It is helpful to **try to keep up-to-date with relevant legal developments** to see how they might affect your use, or your learners' use, of the ePortfolio system. A periodic reassessment of the legal risks, an annual review of the accuracy of your written advice and good practice guidelines, and an occasional **check on your organisation's and your learners' actual use of the system**, is a helpful way to make sure that both your and your learners' use is within the law.

10.2 Data Protection, Privacy and Confidentiality

The ways in which ePortfolio systems are used means that there is often a lot of personal information about learners stored in them. This information may be added by the learners themselves, or by a range of other people, such as tutors, administrators and employers, depending upon the purpose of the ePortfolio and the organisation using it. As well as adding information, tutors, and other members of an organisation, such as managers, administrators, information technology specialists and employers, may be able to access and extract information from an individual's ePortfolio for particular purposes.

Data protection laws affect what can be done with an individual's personal data, by people other than the individuals themselves. Most European countries have some type of data protection law. In the European Union (EU) countries, national laws are based on the EU Data Protection Directive 1995. However, national laws vary quite widely in content and national regulators tend to take different approaches to their enforcement, so knowledge of your national system is important.

Under data protection laws, **organisations and their staff (data controllers) who make decisions about how other people's (data subjects') personal data is to be used have to follow certain rules.** Data controllers should remember three principles: purpose, fairness and transparency.

- Purpose - data controllers may use data subjects' personal data only where they have a clear and lawful purpose for doing so.
- Fairness - data controllers who have identified a clear and lawful purpose for using a data subject's personal data must show that their use respects the data subject's rights.
- Transparency - data controllers must provide data subjects with a basic minimum amount of information about the use of their personal data.

The important thing to remember is that **an organisation is a data controller only if it, or a member of staff acting for it, makes decisions about how and when any of the personal data in an ePortfolio are used.**

- If your organisation just hosts the ePortfolio for a learner and has no control over the use of the contents, data protection legislation will not apply to it, or to you as a representative of your organisation working with learners.
- If your organisation does exercise some control over how the personal data in an ePortfolio is used, it may be considered a data controller, and it will have to ensure that it, its employees, and third parties, comply with national data protection law when accessing the ePortfolio.

Your organisation will normally have decided, prior to using an ePortfolio system, whether, under your national legislation, its functions are likely to mean that the organisation is a data controller. **When you use personal data on behalf of a data controller, it is they, and not you, who are directly responsible if the law is broken.** However, it is likely, either through your employment contract or other contractual agreement, that you will be required to take certain precautions to ensure that learners' personal data is not misused as a result

of your actions. **If you are using learner personal data on behalf of an organization, you should be provided with training about how that data may be used.**

Learners may occasionally use other people's personal data in their ePortfolio. This means that **learners may sometimes be considered by the law to be data controllers**. Where this is the case, your organisation should provide clear guidance both to you, and to the learners, about what learners may and may not do with other people's personal data.

Apart from data protection law, **some countries also have particular privacy or confidentiality laws that relate to personal information**. Obeying data protection law may not be enough to meet the requirements of those laws. Some training and jobs obviously have higher expectations of confidentiality, for example, where ePortfolios are used in support of health-related learning or work. In such cases, greater restrictions may be placed on the data that end users can use in their ePortfolios, or stricter security requirements may be placed on the ePortfolio system.

Most organisations have a person who is responsible for data protection and confidentiality matters. **If you are not certain whether a particular use of personal data is permitted, you should ask for advice before beginning, or allowing learners to begin, that use.** This is especially important where you want to allow the use of personal data from a learner's ePortfolio by anyone other than the learner.

10.3 Ownership and use of information in ePortfolios

The ownership of information that is placed in an ePortfolio can sometimes be controversial. Some examples include:

- An ePortfolio held at an organisation relating to a course of study or training where all the information is created by a learner for their personal use and stored on their home computer - while copyright law across the EU varies, it would normally be the case that users own the information they have created.
- An ePortfolio held at an organisation relating to a course of study or training which incorporates information from an organisation's administrative systems about the learner such as grades, examiner's comments and tutor assessments - here it is likely that some of the information is 'owned' by the organisation and some by the learner.
- An ePortfolio relating to a work experience placement created by a learner on a program designed to help the long-term unemployed - here the learner and possibly the employer will have rights in the data, for example, if the learner has placed into an ePortfolio material held by the employer - copyrighted material, trademarks, material received in confidence etc.

When they create digital/digitised works that they may then place in an ePortfolio, **learners may be creating works in which they have intellectual property rights, such as copyright**. Other parties may also have rights in information that a learner may wish to put in an ePortfolio, and there may be a clash between what the learner wishes to do with the information, and what the third party thinks is an appropriate use.

Organisations should ensure that tutors understand the types of rights in information that the use of an ePortfolio may raise, and how these may affect what learners may legally use. **Tutors should be able to explain to learners what the appropriate uses of information in ePortfolios are, and to discuss why other uses may be inappropriate.** In the Information Society, understanding how the laws relating to ownership of digital materials works is increasingly important. **Misuse of some types of third party information, for example digital music files (MP3s) may leave organisations, tutors and learners exposed to legal actions**, for example, for breach of copyright. Even where legal action is

unlikely, misuse may damage relations between the learner, the organisation, and third parties, such as sponsors and employers.

In circumstances like sponsored education, work placements etc it is important that organisations ensure that relevant third parties like sponsors and employers are aware of the type of information that may be placed in learner ePortfolios, and what it may be used for, so that such **other information owners can provide input into tutor discussions with learners about acceptable uses.**

10.4 Misuse of ePortfolio Systems by Learners

ePortfolio systems may permit learners to extract information from their ePortfolio for presentation to third parties, or permit third parties access to parts of the ePortfolio selected by the learner. Some systems permit users to publish material from their ePortfolio onto webpages hosted by the ePortfolio provider. Publication of ePortfolio-based material may create legal risks, in that learners may make available material that is inappropriate for publication. **Allowing learners to publish ePortfolios on webpages through an organisation may leave the learner and the organisation open to civil or criminal liability for content issues** such as libel, breach of copyright, contempt of court, obscenity and indecency. An organisation considering providing such a service should normally have considered how best to reduce those risks while maintaining as many as possible of the benefits of the service.

It is good practice for an organisation to:

- provide guidance to its learners about the risks of making ePortfolio information widely available;
- provide guidance to tutors about the risks to learners and to the organisation, and what the organisation's procedures for dealing with them are;
- have clear and well publicised rules (and sanctions) for inappropriate publication by learners;
- have administrative procedures for dealing with third party complaints.

It is also helpful, as part of the learner's use of an ePortfolio system, if **tutors can provide advice about how learners can use their ePortfolio appropriately, and encourage discussion of ethical issues relating to the use and publication of certain types of data.**

10.5 User Accessibility, Disabilities Discrimination, and other Social Inclusion Policies

As a tutor, it is important to remember that while ePortfolios potentially offer important advantages to learners, not all learners will find new technologies either helpful or desirable. Certain groups may find the use of ePortfolio technologies has the effect of excluding them from particular activities. Some potentially disadvantaged groups of learners are immediately obvious. In particular, disabled learners for whom technology often provides new opportunities, but also new interfaces to negotiate, may find the challenges considerable. Other groups potentially disadvantaged include:

- learners with poor literacy skills
- learners with poor concentration or memory skills
- learners with limited access to the necessary levels of technology

- learners forced to change between ePortfolio systems on a regular or irregular basis, such as Travellers and children of military personnel

Specific educationally-related disability anti-discrimination laws, such as the United Kingdom's Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA) seem to be relatively new, and definitions of disability vary widely across the EU Member States. However, many European countries are in the process of passing laws which mandate that disabled learners, and other at-risk groups, must not be unreasonably disadvantaged in their access to educational provision.

When using ePortfolio systems, you should **take care to ensure that learners are not inadvertently disadvantaged by your use of a particular ePortfolio system, or particular elements of such a system**. Where there are problems, you should advise your organisation and **take appropriate measures to ensure that alternative solutions are provided to reduce or remove those disadvantages**. It is good practice to **make a written record of potential problems for learners for future reference** as well as to **record what particular measures were adopted to prevent particular groups of learners being disadvantaged**. This will permit both you and your organisation to demonstrate first, that you have taken appropriate account of the disadvantages that might be faced by those learners and second, that measures adopted by you and your organisation to address those disadvantages are proportionate and reasonable.

Summary

- Early consideration of how the law relates to your work can save considerably more effort later on, by allowing you and your organisation to plan to prevent legal risks, or reduce their impact.
- Having a basic understanding of the legal issues is important, so ask your organisation if it can provide relevant training, or access to useful resources.
- Tutors have an important role to play in informing their organisations of potential problems, as working closely with learners provides a clearer view of the practical legal issues that ePortfolios raise.
- Tutors have an important role to play in informing their learners about the implications of their use of information in an ePortfolio, and in discussing the legal and ethical issues involved - knowing these rules is a vital Information Society skill.
- Maintaining adequate documentation of processes and decisions taken with regard to legal issues helps to provide continuity to both your and your organisation's approach to those issues over time.

Examples of more detailed legal materials available for staff working in eLearning and using ePortfolios can be found at:

The JISC Lifelong Learner Legal Study (UK)

http://www.jisc.ac.uk/index.cfm?name=project_learner_records_legal_study

The JISC Legal Information Service (UK)

<http://www.jisclegal.ac.uk/publicationspage.htm>

11 The ePortfolio and Pedagogy

AUTHOR: Serge Ravet (EifEL)

Objective

The objective of this chapter is to understand how current learning theories can apply to the use of ePortfolios in a learning environment. The chapter is a short digest and you are invited to read more of the literature available, but this quick overview should help you to define your own approach, whether you wish to use the ePortfolio to support, improve or even transform learning, or whether you plan to use it for initial assessment, to help the young people you work with find a job, or to deliver a formal accreditation of competencies acquired.



We will start by dividing the learning process (whether individual or community) into its constituent factors and try to see where the ePortfolio might play a role in:

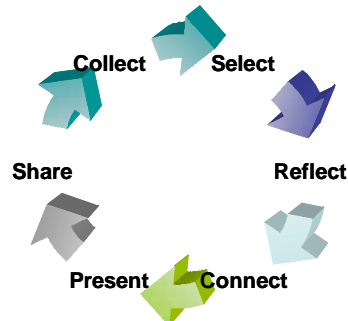
- Registering – e.g. checking prerequisites
- Planning learning activities – e.g. setting standards and measures
- Supporting practice – e.g. “scaffolding” learning
- Reflecting on learning – e.g. getting feedback from others
- Reviewing learning – e.g. getting informed feedback from others
- Assessing learning – e.g. measuring against standards, carrying out prior-learning assessment
- Recognising learning (informally) – e.g. peer recognition
- Accrediting learning (formally) – e.g. a competency certificate
- Managing lifelong learning – e.g. integrating formal, non-formal and informal learning
- Managing knowledge – e.g. sharing knowledge in an organisation or a community

In particular, we will look at the vision underpinning ePortfolio practice in order to:

- Encourage self-directed and autonomous learning
- Foster learner-centred education and training

- Encourage assessment *for* learning rather than assessment *of* learning
- Develop learning communities and peer-to peer learning
- Contribute to identity development

But first, let's recall what are the main activities when a learner uses an ePortfolio:



- **Collect:** learners store their work and learning outcomes in an archive. This collection allows them to see past work, progress, and development over time.
- **Select:** learners select key materials from the archive that best demonstrate their achievements.
- **Reflect:** learners reflect on their work while thinking critically about their total learning experience (including the failures and lessons learned) and making connections between a body of knowledge and its applications.
- **Connect:** learners make personally meaningful connections between community, life and work experiences.
- **Present:** learners compile a presentation to showcase their work for a specific audience, documenting their abilities and development.
- **Share:** learners share the contents of their ePortfolio with peers and other learners.

These activities can be ordered into a cycle very similar to Kolb's learning cycle:



Linking this ePortfolio cycle with Kolb's learning cycle is interesting, as it integrates the knowledge we have about Kolb's learning styles. According to Kolb, learners perceive and process information in a continuum that includes concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation.

Concrete experience: being involved in a new experience

Reflective observation: watching others or developing observations about one's own experience

Abstract conceptualization: creating theories to explain observations

Active experimentation: using theories to solve problems, make decisions

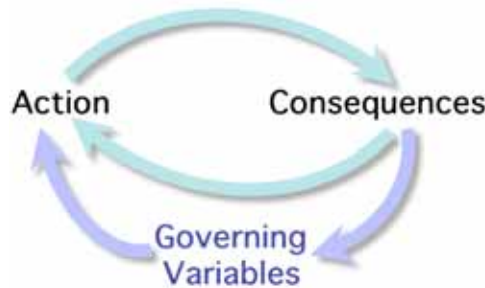
From this framework, Kolb developed four learning styles that educators need to be aware of when implementing and using ePortfolios. It is very likely that, depending on their learning

style, learners will prefer one type of ePortfolio system, and will use and structure it accordingly:

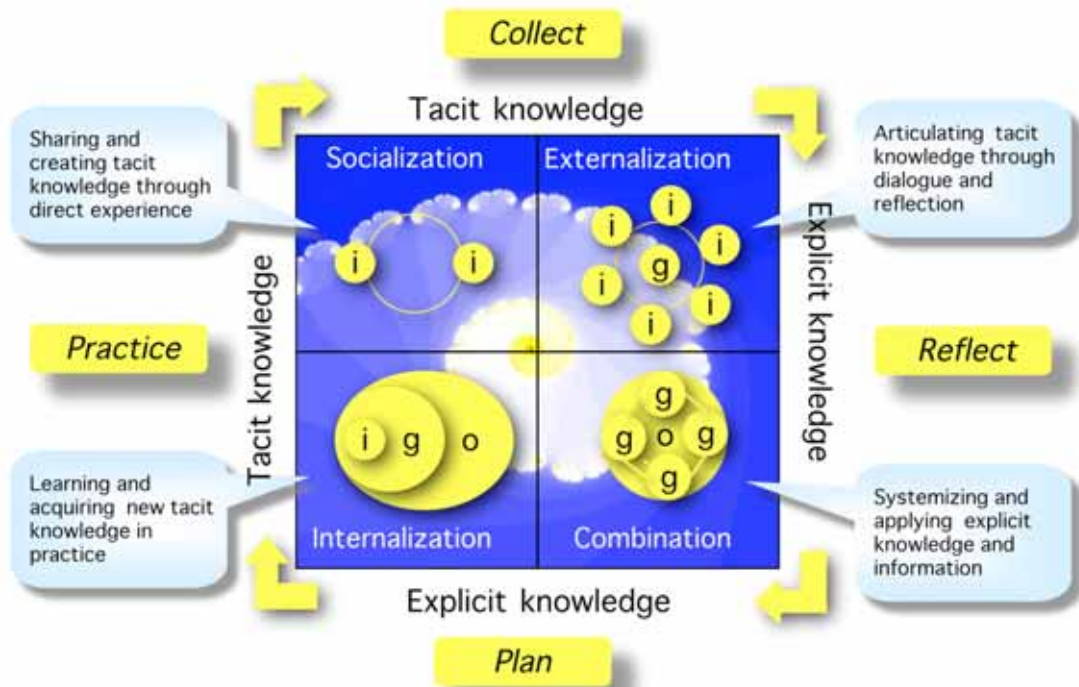
- **Accommodators** (Concrete experience/Active experimenter) like carrying out plans and experiments and involving themselves in new experiences.
- **Assimilators** (Abstract conceptualization/Reflective observer) like inductive reasoning and synthesising ideas and observations into an integrated whole.
- **Convergers** (Abstract conceptualization/Active experimenter) like the practical application of ideas and tend to prefer dealing with things rather than people.
- **Divergers** (Reflective observer/Concrete experience) like creativity and using their imagination.

This is just one example using Kolb’s learning cycle, but we could carry out the same exercise using Argyris and Schön’s double loop learning or Nonaka-Takeuchi’s learning cycle.

Argyris and Schön’s double loop learning



Organisational learning cycle - Adapted from Nonaka-Takeuchi



Recognising the existence of different learning styles, based on Kolb’s theory or other variations such as Mumford and Humphrey (and of course your own experience and observation), is critical to keeping an open mind in supporting ePortfolio users. For example, a current and limited view is that an ePortfolio cycle starts from the *selection* of examples of work, is followed by *reflection* on this selection and ends in *showcasing* the result. In fact,

reflection can be triggered by many different events. The *accommodator* might have his/her reflection triggered from an active experiment, the *assimilator* from the exposition of a new theory. One person might rely more on reflection *after* the facts, the other *before*, to plan further activities.

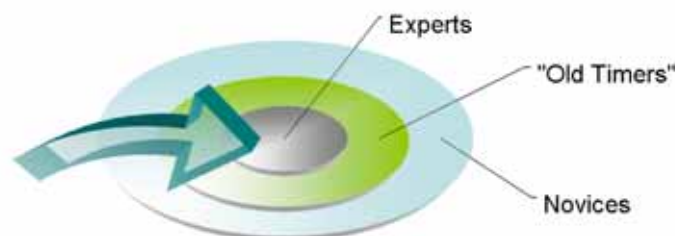
We might also identify **reflective styles**. For example, someone might be perfectly at ease reflecting on his/her own, starting from a white page. Others might prefer to reflect through a dialogue with peers or a tutor. The selection of evidence itself, which is often presented as the starting point of the reflection process, could also be very different from one person to another: some might prefer to do the job on their own, others through a dialogue with peers or a tutor. Moreover, as blogs demonstrate, the reflective activity does not have to be linked to specific pieces of evidence, but can be an autonomous activity. It is the choice of the individual ePortfolio user whether to start reflecting and then connect evidence, or whether to select evidence and then reflect on it.

Of course, the technology used will have an impact on the learning process. Some technologies will be better adapted to certain learning styles than others. For example, some will see the use of forms as a natural way to feed the ePortfolio and will have no problem in adopting a standardised ePortfolio based on pre-defined templates. Some ePortfolio platforms are clearly organised with a highly structured workflow (collect, then select, then reflect) while others, such as those based on blogs and social software (e.g. *elgg*) are centred on the reflective process, evidence coming second, as a way to illustrate and bring supporting evidence to the ideas produced. Similarly, some platforms have a very structured workflow for reviewing ePortfolios (publish, notify the reviewer, get feedback) while others integrate the reviewing process more organically into a social network (publish reflection, get feedback from the social network).

11.1.1 Social learning

Up to this point we have focused on the individual learner. But learners do not learn in isolation. **Learning is a social activity** where other entities than the isolated learner emerge, as in learning communities, learning organisations or learning regions and cities. For example, the medical profession is a learning community, producing new knowledge while working and being engaged in continuing professional development. From the point of view of a professional community, learning is a creative and innovative process that changes current practices and habits, thus also changing social reality.

“Activities, tasks, functions, and understandings do not exist in isolation; they are part of broader systems of relations in which they have meaning. These systems of relations arise out of and are reproduced and developed within social communities, which are in part systems of relations among persons. The person is defined by as well as defines these relations...To ignore this aspect of learning is to overlook the fact that learning involves the construction of identities.” (Lave & Wenger, 1991:53)



For Lave and Wenger, learning is not the acquisition of knowledge, but the increasing participation in a community of practice. Learning involves changing membership status in communities of practice, from entrance as a novice to becoming an expert. Community

knowledge creation, like organisational knowledge creation, is a continuous process where different modes of knowledge interact (conceptual, systemic, operational, sympathised).

Looking at individual learning as a social activity is important in order to understand the emergence of ePortfolio management systems based on **social software**. Such systems are powerful tools to support the construction of individual identities within and across communities.



The social dimension of learning goes beyond the learning process per se and expands to the recognition of the individual. This is where the ePortfolio plays a particular role as a tool for social recognition. Recognition can be informal, as within a community of peers, or formal through accreditation, e.g. accreditation of prior learning or work experience.

Summary

The ePortfolio is a multifaceted tool that can be used for many different purposes within a learning environment. Our **ePortfolio cycle** can be aligned with the different *learning cycles* enshrined in different learning theories and, depending on the learning style of the individual and the circumstances, the ePortfolio tool will be managed differently. We have also seen that the ePortfolio is a powerful tool to elicit and exploit the social dimension of learning.

12 Youth Work Theory and the ePortfolio

AUTHOR: Natalija Žalec (SIAE)

Objective

The main purpose of this chapter is to reflect upon the youth work that has been carried out internationally in the last few decades, and then to discuss briefly the potential the ePortfolio might have in helping to valorize this youth work. This will be done from the perspective of the socio-historical development of notions such as adulthood, youth, social participation, and employment and unemployment; and from the perspective of modern anthropological discourse and adult education theory. We would like you to think about the potential new opportunities for young people's social engagement that might be created by ePortfolio development.

12.1 What does it mean to be young or/ and adult?

Youth as a special period of human life is more or less a phenomenon of the newest epoch of human history. The notion of youth has recently evolved to reflect the **differences between psycho-physiological maturity and psycho-social maturity**. The present-day notion of youth defines the social transition between the statuses of "child" and "adult". Primitive and traditional societies do not know this notion of youth, although almost everywhere we may find at least an act that marks the transition from childhood to adulthood. It may be a ceremony of initiation or simply be when people get married and have their own children or gain employment.

Over the course of recent human history the status and social roles of people have become more and more divided and at the same time more and more complex. This complexity has resulted in a **new awareness of the competencies, knowledge and skills that one must develop in order to take an adult role in society**. Thus the period between childhood and adulthood, i.e. youth in the full sense, has become more and more important. It has become a period of learning for the future, and of formal schooling. At the same time we can metaphorically understand it as a **waiting room** for the permission to live as an adult. We can understand this period as a time when people can mentally comprehend adult matters, so that they are able to learn about them, but are not considered able (and are not allowed) to take responsibility to live as an adult. It is assumed that a young person needs to be protected and guided through the process of learning how to live his or her life, by a more experienced, i.e. adult, person. This concept has been abstracted in different forms of institutionalisation of society. Adults and young people differ in many ways as to rights, duties, privileges and lifestyle.

What previously tended to be a question of initiation through a short-lived group ceremony today becomes a question of entering a significant period of one's life. This period seems to be continually prolonged. At the same time the structure of society continues to change, through scientific and technological development and through population migrations. Demographic changes produce new, less stable social patterns that challenge society's institutions and transform society in a way that one can hardly understand if one is not actively engaged in these changes. In modern (especially Western) society, the passage through which young people are expected to enter into the world of traditionally understood adulthood becomes too narrow for many of them. The social space where young people are congregated thus becomes a new form of social life or subculture, **where the need to be socially engaged gets realized** in different ways from previous traditions, or stays

unrealized. In this way the notions of adulthood and maturity have been transformed and the concept of youth has been given new expression.

12.2 Youth Work and Adult Education

Social division (stratification) in recent times has resulted in new structures of work and labour, new professions, new vocational qualifications, new positions of men and women, new positions of young and old. Patterns of progression within a social hierarchy are no longer predicated on the single notion that the older one is, the higher one's status is. Today's social complexities increase social isolation and decrease solidarity. In many different ways this fact impacts on the position of young people. Theodor Geiger (in Mrgole, 1997, p13) wrote of German unemployed youth in 1932 (who numbered approximately one third of the total population, i.e. about six million) that they lacked interests and goals they might draw on in order to allow them to participate actively in society.

Historical factors such as these are the roots of today's youth work. Youth unemployment and its harmful social consequences have spawned many different programs to help young people survive social isolation. Seen another way, these programs hope to condition potential young offenders to respect the social order and become economically and socially autonomous.

When they drop out from the school system and stay unemployed, most young people have only one chance, i.e. a "second chance", to continue education. That second chance is in the sphere of adult education. The meaning of "youth" in this context is a subject for adult education theory that is still open to discussion and debate, as the definition is underdeveloped in comparison with those of other types of adult learners. The way that today's youth have been designated, that is, as "young adults", argues for the important distinctions that we might find when we examine and compare the new discipline of 'Youth Work' with other learning fields. What is important about the historical development of youth work is the significant change that we can notice in professional discourse, especially in the last fifteen years. The emphasis of youth work has shifted from "adaptation" towards "empowerment"; from "educational programs" towards "individual learning plans"; from "learning in class" towards "learning in community"; and from "banking learning" towards "experiential learning". All these happen primarily in the context of adult education. The discourse of adult education is about "learning for today", not "learning for tomorrow", because when you are an adult it is assumed that you already know how to fight to achieve equilibrium in the face of ordinary life problems. Thus in adult education the period of learning becomes the period of life itself.

Young adults in the sphere of adult education are comparing themselves with other young people whose education privileges them through these same learning principles, and conversely, principles from adult education have had an impact on other fields of learning and education. That is almost one hundred percent true when we speak about non-formal learning on the Internet, which is open for all learning groups.

12.3 Youth Work and the ePortfolio

The ePortfolio brings a wholly new opportunity to youth work. A "learning landscape" networking young people's ePortfolios can create a new social space where young people can communicate among themselves about themselves. It can provide a chance for everybody to reflect upon themselves. It is a ready opportunity for learning new things when one wants to realize one's life goals. It is also an opportunity to share knowledge and experiences for society's common good. In this way people may revalue the values in society. If we are optimistic, we may believe that in the field of knowledge we will notice a shift in values, i.e. from possessing ("intellectual property") towards sharing ("collective

knowledge”). This gives hope that in the future solidarity might enter through the back door. Solidarity is one of the bridges to higher social cohesion; in other words, to more people actively participating in society. If that happens it means a better opportunity for young people too.

13 Using an ePortfolio to help young adults enter the world of work

AUTHORS: Leila Touat and Valérie Albaladejo (Second Chance School)

Objective

This chapter has been drawn up in light of the experiences of the tutors and trainers at the Second Chance School in the Paris region in France during their KEYPAL ePortfolio pilots. It aims to provide tutors with a **vision** for using ePortfolios as a means of helping young adults who may feel disaffected and disadvantaged enter into the world of work.

The development of an ePortfolio with young adults aiming to enter the world of work is a learning experience which requires them to validate their skills, know-how and behaviour within today's society. It also provides them with a tool through which they can develop and acquire more autonomy.

13.1 The ePortfolio in helping young adults enter the world of work

The Second Chance School is open to young adults who have no formal diploma or qualification and who have experienced repeated failure and disappointment in their school, work and home lives. They come to the school to improve their key skills and to discover the world of work through work placements, with the aim of finding a stable job by the time they leave.

The ePortfolio gives them the opportunity to reflect on themselves, their lives, their learning and their future projects. The first step with these young adults is to enable them to become aware of their own skills, to weigh up their strengths and weaknesses and to make plans for their future lives and careers.

Developing an ePortfolio gives them the opportunity to formalise their objectives (I know where I am and where I am going) as well as their learning objectives. It enables them to reflect on their work placements and the practical experience gained when on their work placement with companies. It is a moment in which they can reflect on the socio-professional skills gained during this work placement so as to enrich their CVs.

Any learner who can write and has basic ICT skills can start his or her ePortfolio, as long as he is willing to enter into this process and to build on it.

13.2 The position of the tutor

It is the role of the tutor to propose a structure or scaffolding for this development process. It is obvious that there is an initial need to restore the learners' 'self-image', and it is the tutor's role to achieve this whilst accompanying the learner in his ePortfolio development.

The tutor needs to help the learner:

- To produce written material for the ePortfolio. This might, for example, take the form of a writing workshop to help learners complete the profile part of their ePortfolio, where they present themselves (identity card, what I know and don't know...)
- To formalise their experiences and reflection on their work placements (trainee and tutor reports...).

The tutor needs to bring learners round to believing that “Even without a qualification I am a worthwhile person”, by helping them to define and list what they are able to do from both a theoretical and a practical point of view.

The tutor also needs to help learners reconstruct themselves as ‘social beings’ and not merely students at the school, by helping them formalise and value what they did and achieved before entering the school. Also important is what they are currently doing in terms of external activities (e.g. music, sport, art).

Tutors need to be flexible enough to adapt continually to new situations and scenarios that might arise. They need to adopt an open and flexible strategy towards learners, requiring continual reactivity, learner-focused, and sensitivity to learners’ needs and reactions. The tutors are there to motivate and revitalise learners, as well as accompany them in this difficult and long journey of self-awareness and reflection.

13.3 The ePortfolio and the learner

The learner becomes both the author and the actor of his/her own career, personal development, and ePortfolio. Learners, as psycho-socio-cultural beings, come to the school with their own personal baggage. They will each develop a personal strategy, as the school’s curriculum is tailored to learners’ particular needs; and they are supported according to their own particular difficulties and priorities.

This is a differentiated reflexive approach, as the learners interact with their learning, which then acts upon them just as they also act upon this learning.

The ePortfolio process is not fixed in advance. It is a continual and gradual path that unfolds itself in time.

Conclusions

The ePortfolio is above all about self-reflection and self-awareness. It is about taking stock of who you are, what you know and projecting what you want for your future.

At the Second Chance School we have just started ePortfolio development, and as tutors we are aware that we will see only the start not the end of the ePortfolio process.

The ePortfolio is a personal product which belongs to the learner, who will make of it what he or she wishes. We have laid down the foundations and the initiative will grow or die, will stop or evolve, independently of us as tutors. The gamble we have taken will succeed if we manage to encourage the young adults to carry on with their ePortfolios after they leave the school. It will then become the basis for their continuing development.