



KEYPAL

Recommendations from KEYPAL project to stakeholders

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ABSTRACT This document lists a set of recommendations made by the KEYPAL partners further to the work and pilots carried out in the course of the KEYPAL project to ePortfolio tool providers, ePortfolio implementers and policy makers. This document complements the results and findings presented in the Pilot Evaluation Report.

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Recommendations from the KEYPAL Project to ePortfolio Tool and Service Providers

1. ePortfolio tools should provide introductory prompts to help young adults get started with the ePortfolio and become familiar with the tool so as not to feel overwhelmed by the numerous functionalities and or sections of the ePortfolio. This could be done in the form of a quiz, animated introduction page or questionnaire which would help the users identify what use they will get out of the ePortfolio. Video and or audio animation for this introductory section would make the tool more accessible to this target group.
2. The structure of the ePortfolio (sections, categories etc) should be customisable according to the purpose of the ePortfolio for a particular individual or group of individuals... 'like lego blocks that can be moved around'.
3. It would be helpful to have some pre-defined categories with a structured template i.e. for writing film and book reviews.
4. Young adults often prefer using video and audio content and sufficient storage space should be foreseen by the service provider.
5. A wizard for helping young adults create their own video and audio content and animations would be very motivating.
6. Young adults would like to have the facility to send messages/communicate directly with other users or groups of users within the ePortfolio community i.e. via messages, chat and/or fora
7. Personalising the graphic interface is of great importance to young adults so that they feel ownership of their ePortfolios. It should be possible to customise the user interface (i.e. from basic templates) without needing knowledge of any programming language.
8. The tool should allow users to import/export ePortfolio items easily (i.e. to a CD Rom, USB key, another ePortfolio system)
9. All ePortfolio items should be easily printable.
10. For text inputs a spell checker should be provided within the tool.
11. The user interface should be made available in the different EU languages to enable use throughout Europe. Too many tools are currently only available in English.
12. There should be a facility to enable different levels of access to the ePortfolio (or parts of the ePortfolio) i.e. temporary access to employers via sent via an email invitation from the ePortfolio or parts shared for collaborative work.
13. Young adults should be able to create specific presentations (views) of their ePortfolios for specific purposes i.e. work placement, job interview, work assignment



14. Young adults would appreciate a tool which automatically creates a CV (CV wizard) from the data that they have already put in their ePortfolios. They should ideally be able to incorporate video/audio into this CV too.

15. Young adults do not always have access to the internet. It would be helpful if the ePortfolio tool was could be downloaded locally for off-line and synchronised when next on-line.

Recommendations to Organisations planning to use ePortfolios with Young adults

1. Get support from senior management for your ePortfolio project from the outset.
2. Set up Steering committee approx 5 people of differing profiles (tutor, management, IT, employers, careers users) to agree on purpose of ePortfolio within your organisation and to be involved in the action planning.
3. Organise an induction session (at least 1) with all potential users /tutors in the ePortfolio process.
4. Tutors (and Steering Committee members) at least should create their own ePortfolio before introducing it to the young adult users.
5. From the start set clear goals for the ePortfolio development i.e. organise a final presentation/show to employers or an ePortfolio prize.
6. Assess users level of IT and communication skills in advance of launching the ePortfolio and try to create homogenous groups for ePortfolio work from this. You could also get users to self assess their skills (from 1 to 5) and then work in pairs of strong with weak.
7. Make sure you leave time and provide support for the registration process (i.e. gaining access to the ePortfolio tool). Keep a note of all users registration details including passwords where possible.
8. It is a good idea to organise an initial quiz (a sort of treasure hunt) on the ePortfolio navigation (and content) to help the young adults familiarise themselves with the tool.
9. Organise events to bring ePortfolio users/tutors together to share good practice etc..
10. Organise ePortfolio reviews for users to provide feedback/comments on other users of ePortfolios. You may need to provide users with a guide to how to provide comments and give feedback (i.e. as et of rules) to avoid any in appropriate or discouraging remarks.
11. Young adults most often enjoy tutoring others (i.e. seniors etc) once they feel confident about the ePortfolio tool and concept. You should try and encourage them to tutor others where possible.
12. Ensure the young adults have good and regular internet access (high bandwidth) for ePortfolio work.
13. Young adults will need frequent one to one encouragement from their tutor to continue using and completing their ePortfolio. The time needed to do this should not be underestimated.
14. Animation from the outside community will motivate the young adults in developing their ePortfolios. You could organise a competition (the best ePortfolio), invite the community to ePortfolio presentations by the young adults or provide the users with regular challenges (or progressive difficulty) to motivate them to continue developing their ePortfolio.
15. Where possible try and integrate the ePortfolio into the everyday activities and practice of the young adults (ie. write up of activities, outings, holidays etc.).



16. Use the ePortfolio as part of the consultation process (interviews, personal record & planning) and as an instrument for communication (with careers advisers, employers etc).

17. Tutors need to have the technical skills to support the young adults with their ePortfolios or should at least have access to an IT technician who can assist them when needed.

Recommendations to Policy Makers

1. The concept of the ePortfolio (use, benefits etc.) is still not well known and recognised in the world of work. The ePortfolio and its benefits should be clearly communicated to employers (and employment related organisations).
2. The use of ePortfolios should be encouraged within employer organisations and should play a key role in employees professional development.
3. Governments should provide a national ePortfolio tool for all tailored to the different target groups (as in Wales) as well as free internet access and hosting for all.