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The Australian experience:  
Developing an Employability Skills  
e-portfolio

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# Who is education.au

- National, not-for-profit, ministerially owned, ICT company
- Nexus between education and ICT
- Cross-sectoral (school, vocational and higher education)
- Design, build, manage national services
- Innovative use of emerging technologies
- Knowledge networks
- Work collaboratively, globally and nationally



# Career Services Group

- Online career education services:
  - myfuture.edu.au (Australia's national online career information and exploration service)
  - Australian Career Information Management System (data collection and distribution)
  - myQuiz learning objects
  - Career practitioner professional development support
  - Scoping and researching new services



# e-portfolio project



- Contracted by Australian Government to:
  - Scope an e-Portfolio model (desktop research)
  - Development of functional and technical specifications (agency expertise, consultation with an external Project Advisory Group)
  - Build a beta-release (IMS)
  - Trial the e-portfolio (user testing, questionnaire, focus groups)
  - Report on build and outcomes

## E-portfolio purpose and scope

- Contribute to the implementation of initiatives supporting the *Employability Skills Framework*.
- Provide access to Australians to undertake activities online to identify and record their employability skills.
- Assist individuals in their career development and planning.
- Be publicly available at no cost.

## Primary user objectives

- Gain information to assist in career development and career planning.
- Make successful transitions from school to work or further education and training.
- Having a portable resource to store information about themselves
- Provide information to potential employers.

## Target audience

- Students (school, VET, HE and ACE)
- Recent school leavers
- People seeking to re-enter the workforce
- Job seekers
- Existing workers
- Volunteers

# Functionality

- Create an account.
- Access information to assist in identifying and recording user's employability skills. (No third party access).
- Record, edit, view and delete details about themselves.
- Upload and store evidence relevant to their e-Portfolio.
- Create references to evidence stored on personal storage devices.
- Assemble customised e-Portfolio views.
- Send views to others via email.

# E-portfolio snapshot

The screenshot shows the 'My e-Portfolio' website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'e-Portfolio' and 'myfuture.edu.au'. The main content area is titled 'Introduction' and contains the following text:

**About My e-Portfolio:** My e-Portfolio enables you to create a personal record of your employability skills, education and training (including qualifications), work history (paid and unpaid) and referees. You can also upload and store evidence of your skills.

**What is the best part of My e-Portfolio?** It is designed to assist you in identifying your employability skills to help you win that job or plan your career!

**Once you have created an e-Portfolio you:**

- can update your details at any time
- create customised e-Portfolios focussing on different information you have recorded
- send a customised e-Portfolio to employers or people assisting you with your career planning or job search!

**Getting started**  
My e-Portfolio enables you to record information in any order you choose. You can go straight to 'Employability Skills' to record your skills and upload evidence to demonstrate your skills. You might like to record your personal details first. It's up to you!

Click on the left hand menu items to begin.

At the bottom of the main content area, there is a 'Get Started' button.

On the right side of the interface, there is a vertical navigation menu with the following items: 'Logout', 'Intro', 'Personal Details', 'Employability Skills', 'Other capabilities, attributes & skills', 'Qualifications', 'Work History', 'Referees', 'Assemble', and 'Send'. A 'You Are Here' indicator is positioned above the 'Personal Details' item.

At the bottom right of the interface, there is a circular logo for 'e-Portfolio' with a stylized 'e' and 'P' inside.

# Section example

The screenshot shows the 'My Personal Details' page. On the left is a navigation menu with items: Introduction, My e-Portfolio (with sub-items: Personal Details, Employability Skills, Other capabilities, attributes and skills, Qualifications, Work History, Referees), Evidence Manager, Assemble, Send, and Help. A 'Logout' button is at the bottom of the menu. The main content area has a title 'My Personal Details' and a 'Help ?' link. Below the title is a paragraph: 'You can enter, edit or delete any of your personal details at any time by selecting 'Change'. Only you can view your personal details. Later, when you send an e-Portfolio to employers or others you can select which personal details you want to them to know, without deleting any of your details from the 'Personal Details' section of My e-Portfolio.' Below this is a form with the following fields: Title (Mrs), First Name (Y), Last Name (Generation), Address (Line 1) (10 Simple Lane), City/Suburb (Line 2) (Civillisation), State/Territory, Postcode, Home Telephone (Area Code: (61) 1000 1000), Work Telephone (Area Code: (61) 1100 1100), Mobile (0400 000 000), Email Address, and Photo (Data File) (y\_generation\_photo.jpg). An 'Edit My Details' button is at the bottom of the form.

# Edit personal details

The screenshot shows the 'Edit My Personal Details' page. On the left is a navigation menu with items: Introduction, My e-Portfolio (with sub-items: Personal Details, Employability Skills, Other capabilities, attributes and skills, Qualifications, Work History, Referees), Evidence Manager, Assemble, Send, and Help. A 'Logout' button is at the bottom of the menu. The main content area has a title 'Edit My Personal Details' and a 'Help ?' link. Below the title is a paragraph: 'Enter your Personal Details below. These details appear in your portfolio.' Below this is a form with the following fields: Title (Mrs), First Name (Y), Last Name (Generation), Address (Line 1) (10 Simple Lane), City/Suburb (Line 2) (Civillisation), State/Territory (Select-----), Postcode, Home Telephone (Area Code: 61, Ph: 1000 1000), Work Telephone (Area Code: 61, Ph: 1100 1100), Mobile (0400 000 000), Email Address, and Photo File (y\_generation\_photo.jpg) with a 'Load' button. 'Save' and 'Cancel' buttons are at the bottom of the form.

# Recording 'Employability Skills'

The screenshot shows the 'My Employability Skills' page. On the left is a navigation menu with options: Introduction, My e-Portfolio, Personal Details, Employability Skills, Other capabilities, attributes and skills, Qualifications, Work History, Referees, Evidence Manager, Assemble, Send, and Help. The main content area is titled 'My Employability Skills' and includes an introduction, instructions on how to identify and record skills, and a table of skill categories. The table lists five categories: Communication (2 skill elements, 0 evidence), Team Work (1 skill element, 1 evidence), Problem-solving (0 skill elements, 0 evidence), and Initiative & Enterprise (0 skill elements, 0 evidence). Each category has a 'VIEW' button and a 'MANAGE EVIDENCE' button.

Skill Category	Skill Elements	Evidence
Communication	2	0
Team Work	1	1
Problem-solving	0	0
Initiative & Enterprise	0	0

# Adding a new record

The screenshot shows the 'Add a Communication Skill Element' page. The navigation menu is similar to the previous page. The main content area is titled 'Add a Communication Skill Element' and includes instructions on how to enter a skill element and demonstrate it. Below the instructions is a form with a 'Skill Element Name' field and a 'Demonstrate My Skill' text area with a rich text editor toolbar. The toolbar includes options for Source, Bold, Italic, Underline, Text Color, Background Color, Bulleted List, Numbered List, Indent, Outdent, Undo, Redo, and Format. At the bottom of the form are 'Save' and 'Cancel' buttons.

# Preview for user

The screenshot shows the 'My Communication skill elements' page. The left sidebar contains a navigation menu with the following items: Introduction, My e-Portfolio (with sub-items: Personal Details, Employability Skills, Other capabilities, attributes and skills, Qualifications, Work History, Referees), Evidence Manager, Assemble, Send, and Help. The main content area is titled 'My Communication skill elements' and includes a 'Help ?' link. Below the title is a section 'Communication skill elements - PREVIEW' with an 'ADD NEW +' button. It lists three elements: 'Communication' (with an 'i' icon), 'Discussion/Understanding' (with 'EDIT E' and 'DELETE X' buttons), and 'Writing' (with 'EDIT E' and 'DELETE X' buttons). Each element has a short description. Below these is an 'Evidence' section with a 'MANAGE EVIDENCE M' button. At the bottom left of the main content area is a '<< Back' button.

# Evidence manager

The screenshot shows the 'Evidence Manager' page. The left sidebar contains a navigation menu with the following items: Introduction, My e-Portfolio (with sub-items: Personal Details, Employability Skills, Other capabilities, attributes and skills, Qualifications, Work History, Referees), Evidence Manager, Assemble, Send, and Help. The main content area is titled 'Evidence Manager' and includes a 'Help ?' link. Below the title is a paragraph explaining the evidence manager's purpose: 'The evidence manager allows you to upload files that can act as supporting evidence of your e-portfolio. These files can then be linked to one or more elements within your e-portfolio.' It also provides an example: 'For instance, a referee may give testimony that is relevant to more than one employability skill and a work history record. The reference can be attached to any e-portfolio element that you think it relates to.' Below this is a link: 'For more help on managing your evidence click here'. The main content area features a 'Manage My Evidence' section with a 'LOAD EVIDENCE +' button. It shows a table of evidence items with columns for 'Select', 'Title', 'File Type', and 'Stored Size'. The table lists five items: 'y\_generation\_photo.jpg' (69.60 kb), 'Australian History Year 12 Group Assignment.doc' (19.97 kb), 'Sun in Carcross, Yukon 2.jpg' (763.58 kb), 'Letter of Reference for Y Generation from Generic Employer of Convenience Store.doc' (19.97 kb), and 'Select All'. Below the table is a 'Select Items to:' section with two buttons: 'Remove from storage' and 'Delete evidence & references'. At the bottom right of the main content area is a 'Load Evidence +' button.

Select	Title	File Type	Stored Size
<input type="checkbox"/>	y_generation_photo.jpg	image/jpeg	69.60 kb
<input type="checkbox"/>	Australian History Year 12 Group Assignment.doc	application/msword	19.97 kb
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sun in Carcross, Yukon 2.jpg	image/jpeg	763.58 kb
<input type="checkbox"/>	Letter of Reference for Y Generation from Generic Employer of Convenience Store.doc	application/octet-stream	19.97 kb
<input type="checkbox"/>	Select All	Total Stored:	873.12 kb

# Assemble and send

**Assemble e-Portfolio**

Now that you have recorded details in your e-Portfolio, you can select some, or all, of the information to assemble one or more customised views of your e-Portfolio. You can create several views that highlight information that might be of interest to a particular employer or for a particular industry you are interested in.

Click **ADD NEW** to create an e-Portfolio view.

ePortfolio Views		ADD NEW
My View		ADD NEW
My Second View		ADD NEW
sample		ADD NEW
demo		ADD NEW

**Send an e-Portfolio View**

Select the view of your e-Portfolio you wish to send ...

ePortfolio Views		SEND
My View		SEND
My Second View		SEND
sample		SEND
demo		SEND

# Using IMS e-portfolio specs

- Version 1.0 of the Public Draft IMS ePortfolio specifications
- July 2005, the IMS Global Learning Consortium released Version 1.0 of the Final IMS e-Portfolio Specification after a global consultation regarding the draft specifications.
- Need to enhance current beta release

## Trial results

- e-Portfolio is a functional product that fulfils user expectations.
- The e-Portfolio provided learning outcomes, with the majority of trial participants gaining knowledge regarding the eight Employability Skills and the use of e-Portfolios.
- The e-portfolio requires refinements to increase user friendliness and accessibility.

## Functional enhancements

- Modification of the Evidence Manager;
- Increased options for e-Portfolio output (pdf and Word customisation); and
- Increase storage space (Pennsylvania State University e-Portfolio's 500MB allowance and Gmail's 2GB).

# Improving learning outcomes

- media rich virtual guides;
- Digital Learning Objects to explain the context of the e-Portfolio in an interactive way; and
- activities within the e-Portfolio Training Kit for teachers, parents, career counsellors and other career practitioners to enhance user understanding of Employability Skills.

# Challenges

- Storage and traffic costs
- Privacy
- Meeting employer needs and expectations
- Support for disadvantaged users
- Legacy systems
- Interoperability
- Scalability

# Conclusions

- Need to understand the policy context
- More research needs to be conducted into user requirements and how eportfolios are being used
- We need to understand how they link with mobile technologies
- Will employers use eportfolio information formats across industries
- How do we make it cost effective and support national eportfolios such as this to facilitate access and equity in job searching, education and training and respond to economic and employer needs.

# Questions

# Thank you

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