Early Student Aspirations of Using ePortfolios

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Institutional Context

**Sector Drivers**
- Industry ‘work ready’ graduates
- Changing govt funding & reporting
- Diverse student cohorts

**Technology Advances**
- Umbrellas sector drivers
- ePortfolio use one option

**Pedagogical Drivers**
- Student-centred, ownership, self-regulation, autonomy, transitions (Hartnell-Young 2006)

**Professional Drivers**
- Joins dots – academic study, personal development & professional life (Tosh et al. 2005)
## Value of ePortfolio Use includes…

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pedagogical</th>
<th>Professional</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reflective practice</td>
<td>Enhanced employability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovative assessment &amp; feedback</td>
<td>Evidence of competencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessing EL and WIL</td>
<td>Online private space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progress towards graduate attributes</td>
<td>Lifelong Learning e.g. CPD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*In the end students need intrinsic motivation to embrace these values as their own*
Conceptually what is an ePortfolio?

- Online repository
- Students store and share
- Informal and formal learning experiences
- Over time
- Written, visual, auditory artifacts

(Slade, Murfin & Readman, 2013)

Involves

- capturing,
- selecting,
- reflection on and
- presenting different material for varied audiences

(Becta, 2007)
Different Types of ePortfolios

For example:

- **Process**  (Abrami & Barret 2005)
- **Assessment and Showcase**  (Maher & Gerbic 2009)
- **Personal learning space controlled by the user:**
  - engage with achievements over time
  - builds self-confidence  (Sutherland et al. 2011)
Importance of Understanding Student Aspirations and Experience

• Scholarly support for more research
  (Lin 2008, Peacock & Murray 2009)

• Helps keep student-centred focus in change management
  (Tzeng 2011)

• Indicators are student buy-in, motivation, assessment and technology
  (Tosh et al. 2005)

• Vital for effective uptake
USC’s ePortfolio Journey

ePortfolio Feasibility Study — late 2012
- Ask if the university community values using an eP
- Learn from other institutions
- Pick the best eP system for context
- Gain institutional buy-in and resourcing

Early Adopter Phase — 2013
- Staged implementation important to success
- Preparation for wider implementation in 2014

University-wide Implementation Phase — 2014-2015
- Rapid growth in ‘bread and butter’ program users
- Curriculum mapping, just-in-time training and customised resourcing
- Expansion into other areas
Research Methodology

• Accompanied Early Adopter and Wider Implementation Phases
• Pre- & post-use surveys of students
• Some questions allowed more than one response.
• Human ethics condition – L&T staff administered surveys
• Pre survey completed after brief intro but not used software platform
• Students – 8 programs, 12 courses, 6 disciplines – TPP, undergrad and postgrad. Largest cohort – first year undergraduate
Research Methodology (con.t)

2013 Data Collection
- Hardcopy delivery
- L&T staff administered
- Face-to-face in classroom
- Excel spreadsheet

2014 Data Collection
- Online invitation in LMS + email,
- Link to survey
- Where possible in classroom
- Student mobile devices

Analysis
- Information Sheet
- Completed survey consent
- Survey Monkey initial analysis
- Aggregated results
Results

Three Main Sections of Results

- Demographics
- Attitude Towards Anticipated Use of ePortfolios
- Conceptual Understanding of ePortfolios
Demographics

- 567 respondents
- 48% 18-22 years
- 81% female
- 95% undergrad or TPP
- 87% full-time
- 80% face-to-face
5% Innovative and designers
70% Early adopters/active computer users
21% Later adopters
3% Reluctant and forced adopters
1% Luddites
Attitudes Towards Anticipated Use of ePortfolios

- 10% Enthusiastic
- 38% Positive
- 34% Neutral
- 12% Some Apprehension

*Nearly half optimistic*

How do you feel about the prospect of using an ePortfolio in this course?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Everyday</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 times a week</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 times a week</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 time a week</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 time a fortnight</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 time a month</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 time a semester</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not answered</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How often do you anticipate using an ePortfolio?

- Everyday: 17
- 3 times a week: 62
- 2 times a week: 113
- 1 time a week: 166
- 1 time a fortnight: 68
- 1 time a month: 53
- 1 time a semester: 31
- Not at all: 37
- Not answered: 20
Conceptual Understanding of ePortfolios

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23%</td>
<td>e-tool self-assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19%</td>
<td>both e-version &amp; secure repository</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15%</td>
<td>reflective place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11%</td>
<td>e-filing cabinet &amp; evidence of skills</td>
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Which statement/s best describe your understanding of an ePortfolio?

- e-tool self-assessment: 214
- e-version paper portfolio: 174
- e-filing cabinet: 103
- secure repository: 175
- reflection place: 143
- evidence of skills &...: 108
- other: 15
Conceptual Understanding of ePortfolios

What purpose do you expect an ePortfolio to service in this course?

19% Reflective practice
15% Student learning & CPD
15% Assessment
7% Accreditation & employment promotion
Conceptual Understanding of ePortfolios

23% Critical reflection
21% Evidence of competency
17% Create a CV
16% Submit assessment
14% Demonstrate learning to others
8% Collaboration

What would you like to be able to achieve using an ePortfolio by the end of semester?

- Critical reflection: 229
- Evidence of competency: 301
- Create a CV: 192
- Submit assessment: 217
- Demonstrate learning to others: 99
- Collaboration: 280
- Competency: 17
- Other: 0

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Perceptions of Computer Use
- 91% innovators, active early adopters or willing later adopters
- Younger and mature age included
- Caution using age as indicator of active computer use
- Suggests good foundation for introducing ePortfolios

Feelings Towards ePortfolio Use
- 48% enthusiastic or positive
- 34% neutral

*Suggests other factors involved in translating confidence and willingness in computer use to reality of ePortfolio use*

*Early and ongoing motivational buy-in needed*
What does this mean? - Conceptual

Conceptual understanding of ePortfolios
- Students understand versatility of an ePortfolio
- Self-assessment rather than converting portfolio online

Expected purposes
- Reflection, then student learning and CPD
- Submission of assessment less reported

Anticipated outputs
- Reflection, evidence of competency
Conclusions

• Relative mature understanding of reflective purpose of ePortfolio
• Benefits in storing evidence
• Less about future careers, practice, accreditation, CV but majority first year students.
• Consider timing to increase emphasis on professional preparation – don’t just wait to final year capstone.

Next stage – analyse data from post-use surveys.
References


• Becta. (2007). The impact of e-portfolios on learning. Retrieved from https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B6psyHRq0wqPZFQ0dFJRR2tIQ1U/view?pli=1


