



Australian Flexible Learning Framework

supporting e-learning opportunities

Need more information?

Visit flexiblelearning.net.au/e-portfolios to access these other guides and e-portfolio examples:

- E-portfolios for learners
- E-portfolios for teachers and trainers
- E-portfolios for employers, professional bodies and career services
- E-portfolios for CEOs and managers

Further reading

Joint Information Systems Committee, (2008):

- *Effective practice with e-portfolios: Supporting 21st century learning*
- *InfoKit on e-portfolios*

These are available from <http://www.jiscinfonet.ac.uk/e-portfolios>

Acknowledgment

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The Australian e-Portfolio Project acknowledges the Centre for Recording Achievement (CRA) in the United Kingdom for their guidance in the development of the original documents resource.

Contact details

E-portfolios business activity

Website: flexiblelearning.net.au/e-portfolios
Blog: flexiblelearning.net.au/e-portfoliosblog

Australian Flexible Learning Framework

Phone: (07) 3307 4700
Fax: (07) 3259 4371
Website: flexiblelearning.net.au
Email: enquiries@flexiblelearning.net.au
Address: GPO Box 1326, Brisbane QLD 4001

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e-portfolios

for information technology and teaching and learning support staff



e-portfolios ... are becoming popular around the world as a tool to enhance learning and assist with personal career development. As a member of the information technology or teaching and learning support staff, you might be considering how you can assist teachers and trainers to develop learner-centred activities to enhance the quality and sustainability of their teaching and training outcomes. This guide will introduce you to e-portfolios, their benefits, and the issues you need to consider when implementing an e-portfolio into your organisation.

What is an e-portfolio?

An *e-portfolio* is a learner-driven collection of digital objects demonstrating experiences, achievements and evidence of learning. E-portfolios provide learners with a structured way of recording their learning experiences and work history.

E-portfolios can be developed quickly and easily to capture live evidence through the use of mobile phones and point-of-view devices, and can include a range of digital evidence such as audio, video, photographs and blogs.

Understanding how e-portfolios work

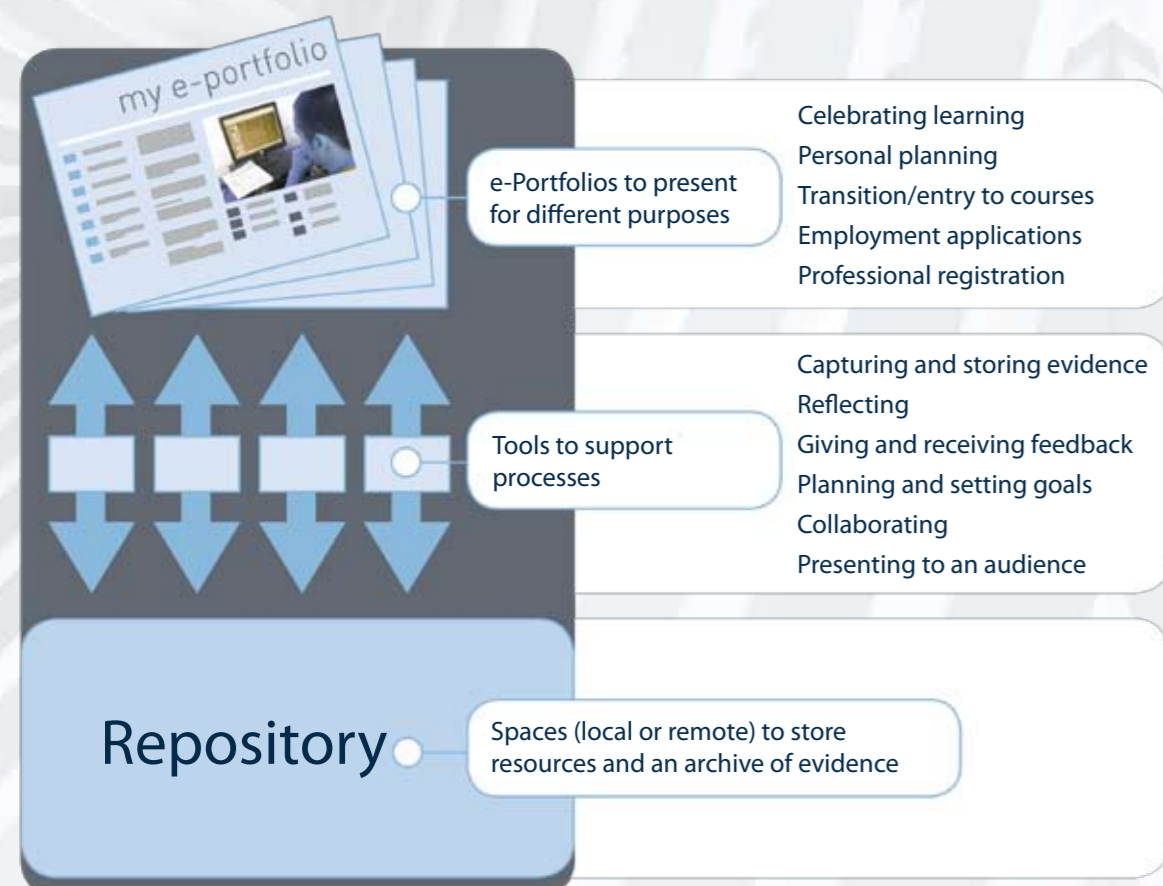


Figure 1 Adapted from Hartnell-Young et al. (2007) Impact study of e-portfolios on learning, Becta 2

Implementing an e-portfolio?

There are many different potential purposes for e-portfolios, so you need to be clear about the reasons that your organisation, or perhaps a specific teacher or trainer, wants to introduce e-portfolio-based learning activities into the learning environment.

E-portfolios can support a range of activities, including training or employment applications, transition between life stages, assessment of professional standards or providing evidence of continuing professional development.

In the VET context, an e-portfolio can assist learners with their personal development by providing an organised online space from which they may:

- develop a holistic overview of your learning, experiences and development beyond individual classes
- understand your learning and experience in terms of work-readiness
- extract evidence to demonstrate your learning and achievements
- identify skill gaps through review of and reflection on your e-portfolio content
- plan, set and review personal development targets.

E-portfolios can also assist teachers and trainers to gain a deeper understanding of their learners, enabling the provision of more tailored advice.

What do you need to think about when supporting teachers, trainers or organisational managers to introduce e-portfolio-based learning?

The following questions have been compiled to help you to clarify the specific needs of the teaching and training staff or organisational managers with regard to using e-portfolios.



What teaching approaches are e-portfolios best suited to?

As mentioned earlier, an e-portfolio is not only a product, but more importantly a process, allowing learners to move beyond what they have learned to consider how they have learned, and to understand the conceptual connections inherent in the creative process of learning.

When they develop their e-portfolio, learners may build their understanding of the linkages between assessment and learning, with the focus changing from assessment of learning to assessment for learning.

Experience-based learning and self-reflection underpin e-portfolio practice, which can help increase a learner's engagement with the learning process itself.

In turn this also helps in the development of lifelong learning abilities and in acquiring specific knowledge and skills. What do you need to think about when supporting teachers, trainers or organisational managers to introduce e-portfolio-based learning?

The following questions have been compiled to help you to clarify the specific needs of the teaching and training staff or organisational managers with regard to using e-portfolios.

Scoping and purpose

- Which teaching or training program areas do we envisage will use e-portfolios?
- What stage are the learners at in their training or employment?
- How might e-portfolios prepare learners for the next stages in their learning?
- What do we see as the main purpose of e-portfolios for our learners?
 - to support their training?
 - to support overall development (including personal and career areas, and experience or learning from non-formal learning contexts)?
 - to develop the capacity for lifelong learning?
 - to support formative assessment?
 - to provide an assessment management tool?
 - to create a presentational portfolio to showcase achievements?
 - to support transition between different learning environments?

Teaching, training and learning quality and outcomes

- What is the level of interest and engagement in e-portfolio learning in the organisation/program area and amongst individual teaching or training staff?
- What learning and teaching or training outcomes do we aim to achieve through the use of e-portfolios?
- How will e-portfolio activities be evaluated to ensure identified learning outcomes are being achieved?
- What instructional or process-driven approaches should be incorporated into both the e-portfolio systems and associated teaching or training activities?
- What ongoing professional development will teaching or training staff require?

Teacher help and support

- In the adoption of an e-portfolio system, are we likely to encounter resistance among teachers and trainers?
- What professional development activities are needed for teachers and trainers to enable them to use the e-portfolio system?
- What form should ongoing technical support take?

Learner help and support

- What guidance do learners need to support the e-portfolio system?
 - guidance on the purpose(s) of the system?
 - guidance on how to use the system?
 - a tutorial program to support the e-portfolio process?
 - online tutor or mentor support for feedback to learners?
 - diagnostic tools to assist with self assessment, or educational or career planning?
 - guidance and warnings about the risks associated with sharing personal information via the web?
 - ICT support?

Information management

- With an e-portfolio, will learners need to:
 - enter, edit and save text?
 - include a range of materials (eg CV, reflections, skills, achievements, goals and plans)?
 - upload files as evidence of learning and/or competency (qualifications, certificates, other digital objects such as images, audio, video)?
 - hyperlink to files as evidence?
 - export files?
 - create their own web page templates?
 - see all their data, with a list of uploaded and linked files?
 - view or link to their academic transcript or official records?
- What types of information will be managed by a learner, and will not be processed for the purposes of the organisation?
 - Are there privacy implications associated with this?
- What information is owned and managed by the organisation?
 - Academic transcript – will a learner be able to view and link to a transcript as authenticated evidence of achievement both during and after their period of training?
 - How will security and authentication of transcript information be assured and maintained?
 - How will the e-portfolio interoperate with our existing e-learning and e-business systems (eg learning management system, student management system)?
- What information might be managed or processed collaboratively eg by more than one learner, or by more than one organisation?
 - collaborative work involving other people's personal data?
 - work undertaken with another organisation, eg work experience placement?
- What are the implications of shared information?
 - Does the e-portfolio system have suitable prompts about the use of other people's data, or other people's copyrighted material, at the point of incorporation?
 - Who has an interest, an obligation, or a right with respect to this data? What is the interest, obligation, or right?

Legal considerations and privacy issues

- Who owns the e-portfolio?
- How do we accommodate our organisational privacy and intellectual property (IP) obligations under the relevant legislation, and under our organisational policies?
- Will a learner be able to view relevant organisational privacy and IP policies from within the e-portfolio system?
- Who will have permission to view all or part of a learner's e-portfolio?
- Who will set permissions for sharing learner information (learner/program area/organisation)?
- How long may/must data be stored after a learner leaves the organisation? What are the organisational responsibilities?

Evaluation

- How might we evaluate our e-portfolio practice?
 - Level of use by learners?
 - Uptake across the organisation?
 - Impact on learners?
 - Impact on teaching staff?
 - Acceptance/uptake by employer/professional bodies?

Accessibility/usability

- Does the system enable use by people with disabilities?
- Does the e-portfolio system comply with our obligations under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and associated *Disability Standards for Education 2005*?
- Is accessibility via a keyboard (instead of a pointing device) available to a learner?
- Can each learner select preference settings for screen display – font style, size, colours of font and background, which are stored and automatically applied at log-in?

Technical standards and interoperability

- To what extent do we want our e-portfolio system to be compatible with those offered by other organisations or associated sectors (higher education, schools)?
- What do we need to consider with regard to interoperability between systems?

Storage capacity and storage duration

- How much space will be allocated to each learner's records and digital files?
- How long will a learner's records be retained, so they may reflect back on progress between 'then' and 'now'?
- What process will accompany deletion of e-portfolios, eg learner initiated deletion or system initiated deletion of inactive e-portfolios?