

Project Update

The ISLE Project looks at how a shared concept of Personal Development Planning, supported by ePortfolio tools can transform how students are supported.

Shared Concept of PDP

The project's shared concept of PDP fits with Dearing in 1997 and subsequently by Universities UK 2002, that it is a "structured and supported process undertaken by an individual to reflect upon their own learning, performance and/or achievement to plan for their personal, educational and career development". The project also draw's on the Effective Learning Framework model of PDP that puts Academic, Career and Personal aspects of PDP on an equal footing. 'Focussed learner questions' guide individuals to self audit Each aspect

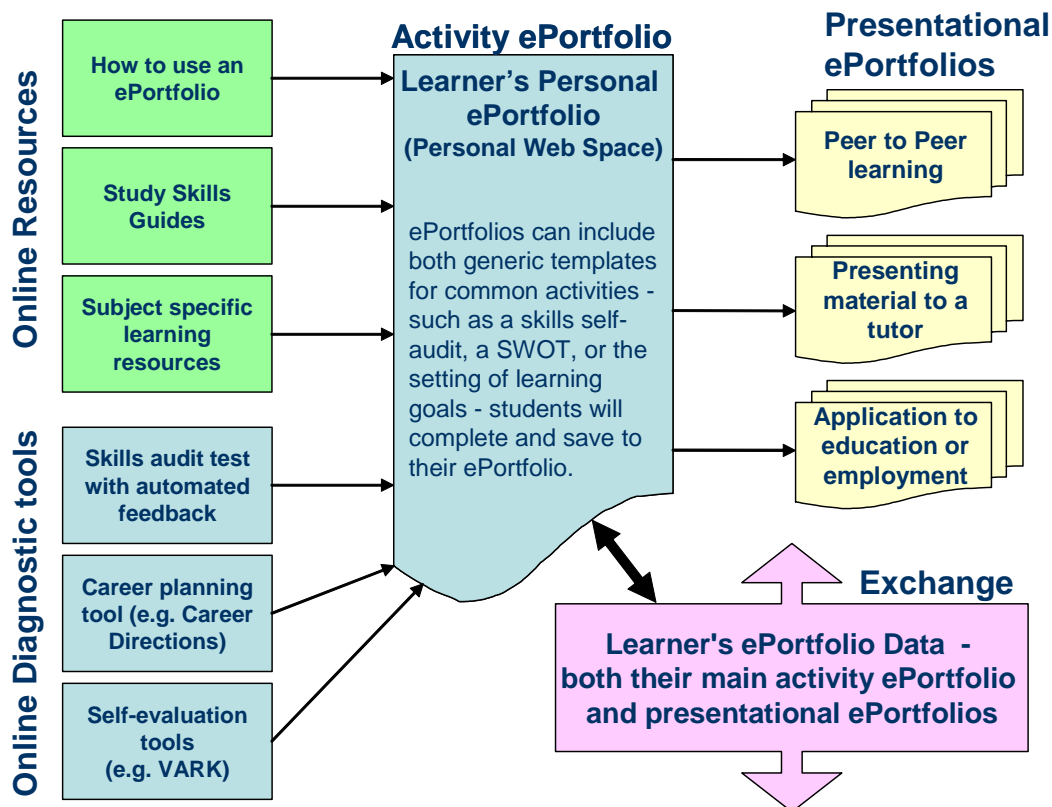


Shared Concept of ePortfolios

The agreed concept used in the project of an ePortfolio system can be thought of in some regards as a personal web space for the learner. It includes space for the learner to securely record output from PDP processes as well as from other sources.

The learner is the only person with the right to look at the content of this area. A tutor may ask that the learner provides access to a presentation of some of the content in the store, but it is up to the learner to decide what elements to share.

The state of interoperability capability between the different ePortfolio systems used within the project is immature at this stage and any transfer of student ePortfolios will not be attempted on any systematic level. However the data requirements of each partner's PDP



model will be mapped against specifications such as UKLeap to measure the state of readiness for the day when system interoperability is a reality. The systems being used currently as part of the project are

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| BlackBoard | Part of the Academic Suite, the ePortfolio system provides a simple unstructured Content Management System for users but has no designs on interoperability issues. It is used at Paisley, James Watt, Motherwell and Dumfries and Galloway. |
| PebblePAD | Developed at Wolverhampton University, it is the 'Flash'-est system being used, being that its interface is a Flash movie. It puts great store in interoperability issues but is also pedagogically speaking 'very good'. It is used at Queen Margaret University College |
| OSP | From the Open Source Portfolio Initiative, the system offers a structured and supported environment once the work has been put in!. Have a look at the system developed at Bell College, http://pdp.bell.ac.uk . It is used at Bell, Dumfries and Galloway and Ayr. |
| SELF | Developed at the University of Abertay, Dundee with a Careers focus it is now extending to encompass the remaining elements of the self model, Academic and Personal. It is used at Abertay, Adam Smith and Angus. |

Phase 1 activities

Over 400 students and over 30 PDP tutors are taking part in ISLE activities during Phase 1. Key anticipated outputs from this phase are an embedded shared concept of PDP and tested ePortfolio systems – with all the rough bits smoothed out. The experience of these participants will be evaluated leading to improvements for phase 2 starting in September. The evaluation will include pre and post experience questionnaires, focus groups, analysis of PDP practice templates and tutor logs, recording experiences from phase 1.

Workshops and conferences

A range of events on PDP or ePortfolios are on the ISLE radar either for attendance or participation. These include:

Evaluating PDP – A CRA led series of workshops on evaluating PDP experiences at which ISLE will present early findings on the PDP experience in Phase 1. (Monday May 15th, 2006)

I before E: identity management, e-portfolios and personalised learning – Project members will be attending this Symposium in London organised by the Eduserv Foundation. (Thursday May 16th, 2006)

The Learner Driver – The RSC managed event with a workshop led by project staff looking at strategies and methods on engaging in personal development with students – arguably the hardest area of PDP for most academics to get to grips with.

ePortfolio Users' Conference – Led by the PebblePAD people but not exclusive to its users the event will look at the growing practice of ePortfolios in UK education. (Thursday 13th July, 2006)

4th International ePortfolio Conference – The project aims to have a significant presence at this event, in the audience as well as on the programme. It is seen as the most significant event for the project. Wednesday 11th to Friday 13th October 2006.