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Visual E-Portfolios:
a Multi-layered Model to Develop Students’ Professional Identity

Association for Learning Development in Higher Education Conference
21-23 March 2016
Dr Amanda Tinker and Vidya Kannara
School of Art, Design and Architecture
Outline

- Introduction, rationale and background
- Focus group analysis and case study findings
- Presentation of the e-portfolio model
- Discussion, application of model and questions
Tradition of the Design Portfolio
Tradition of the Design Portfolio

“By definition, a design portfolio is a grouping of loose sheets collected in a portable case”

“By the middle of the twentieth century...a portfolio, of a carried case, similar to those that architects produce, became a routine appendage for any aspiring student.”

“‘Send me your URL’ is fast becoming a more common request than ‘bring in your portfolio’. But according to many design leaders, a website is generally considered an introduction – a preview to the print portfolio that will follow.”

Eisenman (2006, pp.9-10)

“The ‘Exit Portfolio’ - ....the portfolio you [the student] will use when you complete your education and are stepping into the workforce full time...you are exiting the educational phase of your life as an architect, interior designer, or landscape architect. This is when your portfolio will receive the most scrutiny by several, if not many, practitioners”.

Bender (2012, p.28)
Project Aim and Objectives

To share, map and review current e-portfolio practice, with a view to developing a School Strategy.

- To investigate staff/student perceptions and share current good practice within the School.
- To map current e-portfolio activity within the School and its relationship to the institutional VLE.
- To review current e-portfolio technology, including open source tools and e-portfolio tools/activity in other arts-based universities.
- To develop a School strategy/approach and make recommendations to inform university e-portfolio initiatives.
Method

- Questionnaire
- School event
- Staff and Student focus groups
- Evaluation criteria form
Perceptions and Practices
What, When, Why and How?

- Different ‘definitions’
- Reflection (PDP, blogs)
- Visual showcase (outward facing, exit portfolios)
- Module vs. course level
- Open source solutions
integration with university systems

Privacy/security

Multiple purposes

Copyright

Ease of use

Creative Expression

External or Internally facing
Focus Group - Staff

E-portfolios

- Characteristics
  - Developmental
  - Progressive
  - Holistic
  - Reflective
  - Story/Narrative
  - PDP
  - Digital Identity
  - Repository
  - Record of Achievement
  - Curation
  - Collaboration
  - Moderation
  - Integration (Course, Institutional systems)
  - Flexible
  - Creative expression
  - Sustainable/Portable

- Differentiation
  - Purpose
  - Audience
  - Subject discipline
  - Time

- Tensions
  - Learning log vs. Exit portfolio
  - Formative vs. Summative Assessment
  - Content vs. Presentation
  - Flexible vs. Rigid
  - Creative vs. Standardised
  - Tactile vs. Virtual
  - Supplement vs. Replacement
  - Free tools vs. Institutional

- Motivation
  - Feedback (Student ↔ Staff)
  - Assessment
  - Audience (Tutor, Peer, Industry)
Focus Group – Final Year Students

Expected

- Showing off at the end
- Getting that job
- Takes time and effort
- Stepping stone
- An introduction
- Portrays attitude
- Selling yourself
- Slick

Expected

- Reluctant to share early work
- Keeps improving
- Certain version of yourself
- Gets you through the door
Ideas

Commercial
- Professional
- Focus on skills and level of ability

Freelance (Designer Maker)
- Personal
- Character
- Focus on the person and product

Interview
Clients

LinkedIn

Sketchbooks

Pinterest

Blogs
Learning Log / Reflection

Instagram

“Refined”
Transferrable skills
Extra curricular activities

Physical Portfolio
- Techniques
- Research Journal
- Progression
- Timeline
- Technical File

E-Portfolio

CV

Press Pack
- Vision statement
Physical and/or electronic

“Snapshot of “the best of the best.”}
Dr Amanda Tinker & Vidya Kannara – University of Huddersfield
Yet, in transition and in tandem....
Currently viewed as a welcome addition (not replacement) to the tactile, physical portfolio.

- **Raise awareness of e-portfolio potential amongst staff**
- **Capture perceptions of first year students**
- **Identification of an ‘institutional e-portfolio solution’ project**
- **Pilot model and e-portfolio tool with three courses**

**Students → A means to an end**
- Connection to curriculum
- Motivation changes as sense of professional identity develops
- ‘Package’ of different tools

**Staff → Holistic view**
Discussion

▪ How do your students develop their professional identity?

▪ Which tools/mechanisms are used and what support is needed?

▪ What would be the main focus of an e-portfolio in your discipline (e.g. reflective learning, PDP, professional practice/exit portfolio etc.)?

Feedback and discussion of our model:
  – How might this apply (or be adapted) to your context?
Visual e-portfolio in creative disciplines

Course →

Year 1
Achievements, badges,

Year 2
...
...

Placement Year
...
...

Year 3
...
...

... →

Content →

Professional - developing brand identity

e-portfolio repository of artefacts and evidence

Academic - reflective learning >

Curated showcase

Audience →

Tutors
Reflective Summary

Peers
Reflective Summary

Public
Reflective Summary

Public
Reflective Summary

... →

Dr Amanda Tinker & Vidya Kannara — University of Huddersfield, 2016
Bibliography


