

1 First Steps

For a successful introduction of ePortfolios, you need to have a clear idea about how the portfolio-process works and introduce this process efficiently to your students.

These texts guide you through the details of introducing ePortfolios in your work. Depending on the extent to which your students are familiar with ePortfolios, they will need more or less guidance.

On this side we assume that you and your students are taking (1) First Steps, addressing:

- 1a— **Your role as a teacher**
- 1b— **Introducing ePortfolio work**
- 1c— **Special features of ePortfolio teaching**

—1b—

Explain the basic concept to your students.

Choose a pragmatic approach. Suggestion:

- 1 Design a typical assignment of yours.
- 2 Let them describe what they have learned.
- 3 Let them reflect on it by providing an inspiring question, e.g. How could they have done it in a different way. How does it relate to other authors they know.
- 4 Give them some time for this.
- 5 Let them publish and discuss these thoughts with you.

Address the division of responsibility between teacher/student.

Explain the differences between a student-owned environment and a teacher-managed system, e.g. that only students can publish and delete data. Be aware that it is the responsibility of the teacher to integrate ePortfolio work with all other forms of study. It is also important to acknowledge the efforts of your students.

Reinforce skills in ICT, design and readability.

Explain the difference of typical academic writing and the ways of publishing elements in a non-linear way, like you would within an on-line magazine. Have your students try it out. Remind students that online-writing requires saving often.

—1a—

Be prepared to refine your role as a teacher.

Explain your didactic priorities in order to help students understand what to collect (reading notes, thoughts, artefacts) and how you expect them to communicate it.

Take into account that communication comes in more variety in current societies.

Ask your students about their preferred forms of communication and discuss with them how these or similar means could be used for documenting and reflecting, design a publishing activity accordingly.

Consider that a high level of learning can be achieved in various ways.

Show students the difference of formal domain specific writing (scientific, literary etc.) and a less formal writing (personal reflection, comments etc.) on what and how they have learned.

—1c—

Refine the assignment process.

Define learning objectives / outcomes so that students can relate to them and keep them in mind during the whole process. Support students in understanding them.

Define the workload.

Find out if other colleagues of yours are also giving ePortfolio-related work to students and make sure the activities are varied, stimulating and result in a reasonable workload for students.

Practically support ePortfolio work.

Make clear what kind of outcome you expect, based on the tools and the resources available, e.g. PDF-files, pictures, web pages, wikis, institutional ePortfolio artefacts, multi-media items and so on.

2 Deployed

On this side we assume that you and your students are working in a fairly well (2) Deployed ePortfolio environment, addressing:

- 2a— **Your role as a teacher**
- 2b— **Introducing ePortfolio work**
- 2c— **Special features of ePortfolio teaching**

Remember: For a successful introduction of ePortfolios, you need to have a clear idea about how the portfolio-process works and introduce this process efficiently to your students.

These texts guide you through the details of introducing ePortfolios in your work. Depending on the extent to which your students are familiar with ePortfolios, they will need more or less guidance.

—2b—

Explain the basic concept to your students.

Discuss the Student's Guidelines in your class and explain, within the context of your course, what your expectations of portfolio work are.

Address the division of responsibility between teacher/student.

Make sure students read and understand the information about their rights and duties, in particular that they take responsibility for their published data in terms of copyrights, citations and backups.

Reinforce skills in ICT, design and readability.

Explain to students that they have to work on the readability of their productions, adapting them to their actual target public (e.g. teacher, scholarship organisations, fellow students, potential employer).

—2a—

Be prepared to refine your role as a teacher.

Make sure that learning objectives are provided, understood and used by students for regulating their learning process. Help students to decide how to communicate their expertise.

Take into account that communication comes in more variety in current societies.

Let your students publish and communicate according to some jointly settled rules, according to your requirements, allowing for a combination of various forms of expression of expertise and competence.

Consider that a high level of learning can be achieved in various ways.

Allow for the use of a variety of writing styles and media formats while making sure as an expert that your students work and learn in accordance with scientific rules and practice.

—2c—

Refine the assignment process.

Provide a grid or list of reference of competences in your field of study, if available with the levels of achievement you expect. Relate your assignments to them.

Define the workload.

Coordinate among teachers some possible multi course assignments and activities. Allow for re-contextualising already produced outcomes and settings in new activities or different courses.

Practically support ePortfolio work.

Design activities that include comments and feeds in order to reinforce students' competence in reflecting upon their learning. Make sure they have the necessary tools.

3 Fully developed

On this side we assume that you and your students are working in a (3) Fully developed ePortfolio environment, addressing:

- 3a— **Your role as a teacher**
- 3b— **Introducing ePortfolio work**
- 3c— **Special features of ePortfolio teaching**

Remember: For a successful introduction of ePortfolios, you need to have a clear idea about how the portfolio-process works and introduce this process efficiently to your students.

These texts guide you through the details of introducing ePortfolios in your work. Depending on the extent to which your students are familiar with ePortfolios, they will need more or less guidance.

—3b—

Explain the basic concept to your students.

Encourage students to widen their perspective by enriching their reflection with elements of personal and professional experience.

Address the division of responsibility between teacher/student.

Encourage students to maintain their data, especially to associate all published data with its source (university firm, personal etc.) and to respect matters of privacy and confidentiality.

Reinforce skills in ICT, design and readability.

Introduce your students to the advanced possibilities of your institution's ePortfolio based on the available guidelines and templates.

—3a—

Be prepared to refine your role as a teacher.

Provide questions and support the student's process of answering by offering expert knowledge as a reference.

Take into account that communication comes in more variety in current societies.

Have your students make reasoned choices how to communicate and publish specific artefacts, let them argue for an adequate design, regarding readability and net-sensibility.

Consider that a high level of learning can be achieved in various ways.

Have your students make decisions on their profile as learners and future professionals and make them combine and build knowledge in a process based on their priorities and competences.

—3c—

Refine the assignment process.

Design assignments and activities for students in accordance with the larger ePortfolio process of your institution.

Define the workload.

Take part in or lead an institutionally coordinated approach to a context, more global within your field of expertise.

Practically support ePortfolio work.

Identify ICT-skills that are needed to extend ePortfolio work beyond degree program level (different target group, other kind of expected readability, production of complex artefacts). Advise students to develop their abilities.

In a Nutshell

Teachers' Step by Step

- 1) Describe what your course offers.
- 2) Let your students know what you expect of them.
- 3) Explain how to use the ePortfolio.
- 4) Give feedback and let students give each other feedback during the course.
- 5) Finally, discuss and assess the work done.

Your Students Need to Know

- What is an ePortfolio? General definition, reflection and metacognition as key component to success.
- Life cycle of an ePortfolio:
 - the process of making learning experiences,
 - collecting artefacts,
 - selecting and editing them,
 - designing and personalising a portfolio,
 - reflecting on one's own work,
 - defining the views,
 - focusing on achievements,
 - planning new projects to enter into the cycle again.
- Ownership and self-responsibility:
 - self-awareness,
 - reflexivity using the ePortfolio,
 - defining and achieving goals,
 - developing strategies,
 - explaining and communicating abilities.
- Artefacts of an ePortfolio: what can be integrated?
- Types and further uses of an ePortfolio
- Guidelines for reflective practice
- Competence grid for an overview of studies and areas of competencies.
- Practical information about technical conditions.
- Support.

Teaching the ePortfolio Way



Teachers using ePortfolios:

- monitor the process,
- advise their students and
- inform about expectations and terms of use.

The approach to ePortfolios can vary strongly, from single course or study programme to whole study. Consequently, also the types of activities chosen vary in nature and scope.

Here you will find three pages with guidance and suggestions for teaching the ePortfolio way, sorted according to the level of implementation:

- 1) First Steps
- 2) Deployed
- 3) Fully developed