

# Exploring health learner experiences of, and attitudes to, feedback through ePortfolios

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## Project Information

<http://www.qmu.ac.uk/eportfolio/research.htm>

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# Overview of the workshop

- The project
  - Drivers for our research
  - Overview of research
- Learner perceptions of ePortfolio and feedback
- An overview of an emergent approach to feedback using ePortfolios to support the development of professional competency and identity in health science learners



# Why ePortfolios and feedback?

- In groups, consider:
  - Why feedback?
  - Why ePortfolios
  - What could be the advantages of/potential for linking ePortfolios and feedback?



# Background thinking ....

- Students in the health sciences undertake learning activities in clinical environments where feedback is unstructured, ad-hoc, if at all.
- Feedback is critical for supporting professional knowledge acquisition , skills development and especially professional identity
- General student dissatisfaction regarding feedback
- Growth in popularity and application of ePortfolio in the tertiary education sector particularly for **reflection**

# Research (Feb – July 2009)

<b>Case study</b>	<b>Focus groups</b>
<b>1. BSc (Hons) Diagnostic Radiography</b> forms, blogs, webfolio (PDP) Formative and summative	Group 1 (yr4): 4 females, 1 male, mean age 30.8 Group 2 (yr2): 3 males, mean age 42.6 Group 3 (yr3): 3 females, 1 male, mean age 28.7
<b>2. MSc Physiotherapy (pre-registration)</b> Webfolio Formative and summative	Group 4 (yr2): 4 females, 3 males, mean age: 30.3
<b>3. BSc Nursing</b> Webfolio Summative	Group 5 (yr4): 6 females, mean age 23.8 Group 6 (yr4): 6 females, mean age 22.5

# Learners' perceptions of benefits of ePortfolio and feedback

- Immediate, permanent & accessible
- Single location
- Targeted and focused
- Springboard to further discussion



# Learner quotations

“...it's quite nice knowing it's going to be there and it's safe and you can access it whenever.”

“I quite like the fact that if there's one specific issue you can generate a dialogue and I would never have done that with a paper-based feedback.”



# Learners' perceptions of barriers to ePortfolio and feedback

- Preferences for face-to-face
- Increased tutor workload
- Technical Issues
  - Firewalls, software glitches
- Another technology to learn
  - Time, skills acquisition



# Learner Quotations

“I’d hate to think that ePortfolio would mean that you wouldn’t get any of that type [*referring to face-to-face*] of feedback. I mean I think it’s nice to have it but I’d hate it to overtake, you know just get rid of the verbal feedback or any kind of interaction because that would be wrong.”

“I think the trouble with that is it then puts a large workload on our tutor because she’s having to read every single person’s entries and think about them on these personalised terms and give personalised feedback. But yeah I agree it’s good.”

“I think it’s the definitions of the things as well, I don’t know what a blog is or an asset is in e-portfolio, I know what it is in daily life but what is an asset in e-portfolio, what is a blog in eportfolio.... I think maybe I am just a bit older and I don’t understand the hip language but...”



# Student perception of feedback

- Personal, written and/or verbal communication from tutor or specialist expert
- Informs student
  - Are they on the right track?
  - About their strengths and weaknesses
- Focus on error correction
- Expected and deserved



# Learner Quotations

“Feedback is when the lecturer is reading over your work and giving you suggestions and comments on how you can improve it, what’s right and what’s wrong.”

“...because otherwise you would just be trouping on without any sort of way to gauge how you were doing, how you were...you could be going completely off in the wrong direction, and you need someone to say *‘hang on a second, go this way or find out what’s right and what’s wrong, what are the things you have done’* and direct you a little I suppose.”



# Short summary

- Our learners like ePortfolio for feedback
- Little long-term engagement with feedback in ePortfolio
- A few cases: some wider engagement if across a programme and tutor support
- Learners have
  - limited, one-dimensional approach to feedback
  - narrow understanding of their role in feedback process



# Maximising impact of ePortfolio for deeper engagement with feedback

- Learners need to
  - Develop a broader conceptual understanding of feedback
  - Take a more pro-active role in the feedback process
  - Acquire a better understanding of how they can use ePortfolio for feedback

Developed an emergent [approach for health science learners](#)