Making the Case

More effective practice with PebblePad

A collection of case studies from PebbleBash 2012

Edited by Alison Poot
Making the case:
More effective practice with PebblePad

A collection of case studies from PebbleBash 2012

Edited by Alison Poot
Contents

From ‘ePortfolio’ to ‘Personal Learning Space’ by Alison Poot ___________ VIII

Part One - Case studies

1 PebblePad for Performance and Professional Development Review or PPPPDR.
   Jeremy Benson, Alice Helm-Alabaster, Sarah Ruston ________________ 3

2 Swansea Employability Award.
   Chris Cardew _______________________________________________ 9

3 ePortfolio based learning for accountants... Does it add up?
   Rachel Challen, Lorraine Howell, Lisa McKeown, Emma Purnell ___________ 13

4 Four fab ideas – including marking on iPads and the ‘why?’ question.
   Robert Chmielewski ___________________________________________ 18

5 Using e-workbooks with health care students in Higher Education.
   Asanka Dayandanda, Agi Ryder __________________________________ 24

6 Taking it to the next step: Managing large-scale, meaningful e-assessment in new curricula.
   Linsey Duncan-Pitt, Debra Holmes _______________________________ 32

7 Keeping track of research students - and supervisors!
   Mark Gamble _________________________________________________ 37

8 Facilitating e-assessment (the grading of clinical practice) through the use of shared webfolios.
   Deena Graham _________________________________________________ 41

9 Drivers and barriers to using eportfolios as a newly qualified teacher.
   Elisabeth Barratt Hacking, Susan Martin, Geraldine Jones, Peter Webber _____ 46

10 Using PebblePad to support school wide collaborative learning.
    Jackie Haigh _________________________________________________ 51

11 From small acorns do big trees grow: Developing distance learning from 5 units to 20 credit modules and beyond!
    Paul Hampton, Glynis Hampton, Emma Purnell ______________________ 56

12 Using the ePortfolio PebblePad as an electronic laboratory notebook.
    Dale Hancock, Jill Johnston, Sashi Kant, Vanessa Gysbers, Tim Newsome, Ruth Weeks, Gareth Denyer ____________________________ 61
Encouraging student careers reflection, planning and engagement through online portfolio (webfolio) building.

Andy Howard

“It forces me to reflect and reconsider what I thought I knew... and I was enjoying it!” Reframing CPD as dialogic blogging.

Julie Hughes, Gavin Rhoades

Improving results and student experience through the application of the BLPAS (Blended Learning Phased Assessment Strategy) framework to a cohort of 200 level 5 students.

Ingrid Kanuga

The use of PebblePad for reflective practice in the Keele MPharm programme.

Katie Maddock, Luke Bracegirdle

CSP ePortfolio: Personalising products and processes.

Gwyn Owen, Nina Paterson

PebblePad tools for a 3D approach to transition – industry, VET, HE or Career Pathways.

Pauline Porcaro

The impact on the compliance of recording CPD activity following the introduction of an eportfolio within a professional membership organisation.

Karen Reed, Liz Salem

A music teacher’s development – documenting the journey for accreditation.

Jennifer Rowley, Peter Dunbar-Hall, Madeleine Bell, John Taylor

PebblePad in the Operating Theatre – a good prognosis.

Andi Sambrook

Is it acceptable to remotely supervise placement students electronically via their eportfolio reflective learning blogs?

Pritpal Singh Sembi

Empowering PebblePad users through a University wide support forum.

Sandra J Stewart, Alissa Haddad

Evaluation of the student experience of using PebblePad as a tool to support the Professional Development Portfolio (PDP).

Kim Stuart, Leonie Siddons, Robert Farmer
PebblePad profiles for enhanced employability and reflexivity in the arts.

Eti Wade

Part Two - Student Perspectives

1  Ruth Barnsley, University of Derby .................................................. 143
2  Yi Vee Chew, University of Sydney ................................................... 145
3  Rajan Claire, University of Wolverhampton ...................................... 149
4  Lizzie MacKay, University of Wolverhampton .................................... 151
5  Sandra Stewart, Charles Sturt University .......................................... 153

Index ........................................................................................................ 157
Introduction

From ‘ePortfolio’ to ‘Personal Learning Space’

In 2010 I had the pleasure of editing submissions for the first PebbleBash case study book, ‘Effective use of PebblePad’. Having been with Pebble Learning for only 5 months this was a great learning experience for me and helped me to get a feel for the creative ways in which PebblePad was being used in education in Australia and the UK. It was clear from the submissions I was reading that many of the authors were grappling with the same issues as I was as a relatively newly appointed ‘ePortfolio Consultant’….. what exactly is this PebblePad ‘thing’? ….. how do we describe it and sell it to staff and students? ….. what should we be doing in/with it? ….. we think it’s going to be good but we’re not quite sure how or why.

Coming from an ‘ePortfolio Coordinator’ position at the University of Tasmania, many of the case studies in 2010 reflected my own experiences of managing the early implementation of PebblePad in a university environment. They were small scale, reliant upon brave and respected local ‘champions’, forging ahead with very little institutional or IT support, and struggling with the changes to curriculum and teaching practice that a more student-lead approach to teaching required.

And then there was the ‘ePortfolio’ word! That was what it was all about ….. eportfolios. Universities brought in PebblePad because they ‘had’ to have an eportfolio. Courses, particularly in areas such as nursing and education, started to explore PebblePad because students ‘had’ to have an eportfolio. ePortfolios were going to be the way for careers services to engage with and become relevant to students across the institution. But what, exactly, did this mean?

It took me a long time to figure it out (and I am sure I don’t fully understand it all yet!). What I do know now is that the ‘eportfolio’ term has been both a blessing and a curse. Associating PebblePad with ‘eportfolios’ has definitely raised its profile and brought it into the consciousness of many people who otherwise might have been blissfully unaware. It would be fair to say that most of our customers went in search of an ‘eportfolio’ and then ended up with PebblePad and I would hazard a guess that this will continue to be the case for new customers for some time to come. It is certainly how I became involved with PebblePad.

The curse is that the term ‘eportfolio’ has a tendency to constrain people’s understanding of what PebblePad can and should be able to do. They are looking for a system that can create ‘A purposeful aggregation of digital items’, our preferred definition of an ‘eportfolio’. Many systems can do that effectively and if that is what you are looking for then much of the power and value of PebblePad will be missed. Articulating what sets PebblePad apart is the hard thing. We know that it is ‘more than an ePortfolio’ – but how exactly?
Shane will remember well the day that I had my ‘Aha’ moment. It was October 2010 and I had been using PebblePad for more than 2 years and working for Pebble Learning for almost a year – this goes to show how long it can take (or perhaps I am just very slow). I was exploring the eportfolio system of a competitor when the pieces suddenly fell into place for me and I could see exactly what it was that set PebblePad apart. I emailed Shane full of excitement to which he responded something along the lines of, “Yes ...... and? That’s what we have been saying for years!” Just goes to show that you don’t really ‘get it’ until you work it out for yourself. The following is an excerpt of the email that I sent to Shane and articulates what, for me, makes PebblePad a Personal Learning Space:

The many templates in PP encourage users to consider their experiences and make choices about the best way to represent the learning achieved. The best way I can think to describe it is to use the example of a student who has been on placement for a week. In [other eportfolio system] they might keep a blog and upload an evaluation from their supervisor and lesson plans that they created. In PP however the student is confronted with options to create abilities, achievements, action plans, activities, etc, encouraging them to reflect on the week and create an assortment of assets about a variety of learning opportunities that might otherwise have gone unnoticed. Within each asset the student receives guidance on how to write a ‘good’ description and is encouraged to reflect on each asset individually. Through this process the student will end up with a much richer, more insightful account of their practicum and a great deal more evidence of their learning. This is the ‘personal learning ‘ that PP supports so well.

Basically you can store files and present yourself in both PP and [other eportfolio system] but it is only in PP that users are pushed to make sense of their experiences to a much deeper level through the inbuilt templates and reflection. Personal learning is the core of PP while presentation is the core of [other eportfolio system] (in a very social environment). Put another way, what goes on within PP is the most important while [other eportfolio system] seems to focus more on what comes out.

(Personal Communication, 2010)

Reflecting now on what I wrote then I think that the statement in the final sentence, ‘... what goes on within PP is the most important …’ is at the heart of the matter. This is what makes PebblePad a Personal Learning Space and this is what people miss if the focus is on an ‘eportfolio’.

In the Introduction of the 2010 PebbleBash case study book Shane wrote:

...... I would argue that we relinquish the term ‘eportfolio’ to the wider community but assiduously promote the notion of a Personal Learning System [Space] and rigorously defend what we believe the term stands for. (p. IX)
In training, at conferences, when conducting demonstrations, and in everyday discussion we have been focussed on promoting the notion of the Personal Learning Space, and using the term ‘eportfolio’ to describe not a system or a process but instead a **product** of learning.

It was, therefore, with great delight that I discovered, upon reading the submissions for PebbleBash 2012, that this shift in focus and understanding was being reflected in the case studies. Just as my understanding of PebblePad and PebblePad implementation has matured since 2010, so has that of our community.

The 2012 case studies describe larger scale implementations, integration with other institution systems, action research based on 1, 2, 3, or more years of practice, empirical research data, and a diversity of use of PebblePad that goes well beyond the creation of ‘eportfolios’. At a superficial level, fifteen case studies in 2010 contained the term ‘eportfolio’ in the title while in 2012 this has reduced to only six. The titles instead reflect the diversity of use with key terms such as: Performance and Professional Development Review; Employability; e-Workbooks; Research; e-Assessment; Collaborative learning; Distance learning; e-Laboratory notebooks; Personal Development Planning; Transition; Professional membership organisation; Operating Theatre; Remote supervision; Professional Development Portfolio. Behind the titles is content that demonstrates a developing understanding of the principles and power of the Personal Learning Space, and how this space enables engaging and innovative student-lead teaching.

The case studies have moved beyond the initial challenges of implementation and engagement, very much the focus of the 2010 case studies, and are instead discussing issues of curriculum design, e-assessment, and developing best practice based on experience. We also have two case studies from professional membership organisations, reflecting the increasing uptake of PebblePad outside the education sector.

The theme of PebbleBash 2012 is ‘Making the Case’, a theme that I have not overtly addressed at all in this Introduction. However, I believe that there is no better case to be made for any teaching and learning tool than to demonstrate its growth and the growth of its user community – not just growth in size and numbers but more importantly, growth in terms of shared understanding, maturity, and successful outcomes. To assist you to put this case to the ‘powers that be’ in your institution or organisation, each case study in this book concludes with a summary of key points that ‘make the case for PebblePad’. Put together, they start to present a powerful argument for the benefits of effective PebblePad implementation.

I hope that you enjoy reading these case studies from our passionate and dedicated user community as much as I have and that they help to inform your understanding and developing use of PebblePad, **our** Personal Learning Space.

Alison Poot  
Australian Director, Pebble Learning  
June 2012
Part One

Case studies
PebblePad for Performance and Professional Development Review or PPPPDR

Jeremy Benson, Alice Helm-Alabaster, and Sarah Ruston
Centre for the Development and Enhancement of Professional Practice
University of Cumbria, UK

Chosen theme(s)

Learning: Employability
Teaching/Professional practice: Continuing Professional Development
Organisation: Managing Organisational Process

The background context

The Performance and Professional Development Review (PPDR) itself was a modification of an existing appraisal process which was still primarily paper based. It was challenging to introduce a new, institution-wide electronic process which, although not mandatory, was recommended as offering efficiency, reusability, and support for a ‘living’ appraisal and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) discussion and document. There were concerns over the introductory/threshold skills for staff in many areas of the University, but also concerns over engagement with the concept of PPDR even before the technology was considered.

The project selected a ‘Profile’ in PebblePad because this seemed to offer the easiest route that could accommodate complete beginners and regular PebblePad users. The field driven entry and completion seemed to offer the steering and direction it was felt were vital.

Why PebblePad?

In the first year of the new PPDR process, PebblePad was only one of the ways of supporting the underpinning professional dialogue. In the Centre for the Development and Enhancement of Professional Practice (CDEPP) we had experience of supporting appraisal using PebblePad, but needed to push this new process as primary and the platform as something Faculties and Services felt that they had choice over.

In the actual roll-out, the agility and flexibility of PebblePad lead to a much stronger uptake of the PebblePad PPDR Profile than we anticipated. The support and framework PebblePad offered for a reflective and discursive process persuaded more use and increased the completion rate for Appraisal/PPDR to over 90%. (Sector average = approx. 70%).
The purpose

The PPDR was a refreshment of the Appraisal Scheme, to ensure that the review methods for both performance and professional development activity aligned with the plans and priorities for the University’s development.

The PPDR discussion (both face-to-face and electronic) covers:

- Clarification of expectations and objectives regarding job role.
- Any aspirations that staff have and the guidance, support and professional development they may require.
- How individual staff roles make a positive impact on, and contribution to, the Faculty/Professional Service they work for and, in turn, how what they do links directly to achievement of the University’s plans.
- The ability and requisite steps to realise career development potential in ways which support the University’s future requirements.

The approach

Timeline: Immediate 12 week rollout
Stakeholders: All Faculties and Professional Services
Existing Model: PPDR = strategic adaptation of appraisal process
Design: Planned to be an iterative process

We asked the question “Why not use PebblePad to complete your PPDR?” In all formal communications it was recommended that the PPDR process was completed using the PPDR documentation available in PebblePad, as this would most easily enable ongoing review and reflection on progress and achievements, and the accumulation of evidence and feedback to enrich the PPDR discussion and regular follow-up professional discussions throughout the year. However use of PebblePad was not required.

Proposed Benefits:

- The easy to use PPDR Profile in PebblePad offered an efficient way to compile and update staffs’ PPDR documentation, whether using reflections and evidence previously stored in PebblePad or writing as they went.
- The Profile was easy to complete and easy to share.
- The PPDR process using PebblePad offered economy of effort for both individual staff and their line managers this year.
- The benefit of reusing documents and evidence, saving time and effort, in future years.

All PPDR documentation, including extensive guidance, login to PebblePad and hints and tips to complete through PebblePad, was made available in a Webfolio via the PPDR Profile itself.
Links were provided to Frameworks, Plans, and Strategic Documents:

- Research & Scholarship Plan
- Leadership & Management Framework
- Association of University Administrators Professional Standards
- UK Professional Standards for Teaching and Supporting Learning in Higher Education
- Professional Standards/Benchmarks
- Internal Professional Development Programme
- Internal Development Days (& the requirement to attend) once known
- Academic Workload Planning
- UoC additional information and support
- Faculty Action Plans/NSS information
- Professional Service Plans

The result

One of the early unanticipated outcomes was that one Faculty who were using PebblePad extensively already, asked HR and the Project Team for permission to design their own PebblePad Form, which would present the whole document on one page and offer a much simpler look. The Project Team was happy to endorse this kind of ‘ownership’ of the process, and HR agreed with the proviso that consistency of naming and headings was maintained.

One Professional Service asked for permission to adapt the Profile and created their own Webfolio design, and this also was approved.

As of February 2012, we have completed a project stage ‘Reviewing & Refining the Performance and Professional Development Review’.

Following the positive response to, and high level of participation in, the PPDR process, we invited feedback on the experience of engaging in the PPDR, including the use of PebblePad. We also asked how the benefits and quality of engagement in the PPDR process could be enhanced for individual users and team leaders. To shape and improve the process for the next cycle, we prepared a brief online survey to enable feedback.

We set up a ‘Review & Evolve’ Group for the PPDR to looking at how we further enhance the process, to ensure that it was meaningful and productive.

The biggest challenge proved to be that of the PPDR as a live document that staff and line managers revisit continually to monitor progress against performance objectives, reflect upon CPD, and attempt to offer timely feedback, discuss any problem areas, and plan for the future.
We received positive feedback about:

- the ease of use of PebblePad,
- the linking and compiling of evidence,
- the platform it offered for a ‘live’ document,
- the ability to comment and collaborate before, during and after the PPDR formal meeting,
- PebblePad being flexible enough to allow adaptation and ownership of the process.

We received negative feedback about:

- the Profile itself seeming very formal,
- the layers in the profile making a clear overview difficult,
- the Traffic Lights not being very helpful,
- commenting being too open and flexible,
- there being too many pages,
- printing after completion being too complex.

The feedback helped us redesign both the layout and the asset type. We have moved to a pared down Webfolio. This has made it easier to take a copy at Formal and Interim Review Stage and then continue moving forward with a rolling reflective/evidencing process.

**The impact**

The PPDR process has increased engagement with the appraisal process dramatically. HR and CDEPP were initially pleased when response/completion rates hit 75%, but we eventually reached 90%. Although the use of PebblePad was not required, approximately 75% of respondents used PebblePad as the method of completion and sharing.

The impact of being flexible in approach and allowing re-design for increased ownership was also very positive. The Professional Service who adapted the profile and used their own Webfolio design, and the Faculty who adapted the profile and used a single page Form, both reported strong and early uptake, positive feedback about self-designed assets, and better staff engagement with the underlying process. This was pleasing because it resulted in staff perceiving the process as more relevant to their specific professional context.

**Publicity**

The PPDR Project Team successfully bid for small project funding from the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education Small Development Projects Fund to carry out further work on the alignment of objectives and employee engagement through effective performance and professional development reviews.

The aim of the project is to further refine and evolve the PPDR process to ensure and enhance the quality of engagement in the PPDR and future planning. It is vital that we
build on the good work already undertaken at the University since the launch of the PPDR in May 2011 to ensure that the PPDR is an agile, reflective process that facilitates continuous improvement at an individual, team, departmental and organisational level.

Among the objectives:

- Refine further the University’s recently developed PPDR process and explore how dynamic the process can be whilst retaining and enhancing quality.
- Consolidate the building of leadership capacity and effectiveness through strategic performance management and professional development, by monitoring progress against performance objectives, timely feedback, discussing any problem areas, and planning for the future.
- Explore the relationship between the quality of ongoing PPDR discussion referencing departmental performance and engagement measures such as the National Student Survey (NSS), staff survey results, benchmarking against professional frameworks, and the overall performance of that Faculty/Service.
- Enhance the underpinning technology (PebblePad) as the tool to complete the PPDR. Explore how PebblePad enables an agile process that facilitates continuous dialogue and collaboration between colleagues, and makes it easier to reflect on, develop and evidence professional and performance objectives through a professional eportfolio. Consult with Faculties/Services about ownership and customisation of the PPDR documentation in PebblePad.
- Share all outcomes with the HE Sector (not just HEIs with current PebblePad licences).
- Create a toolkit and dissemination strategy to ensure the wider HE community benefit from all project outcomes and the recent learning and innovation that has taken place in this area at the University of Cumbria.

Lessons learnt

We decided in the early stages of planning that, although an institution-wide rollout was much more challenging than a small scale pilot, the simultaneous and shared learning process would contribute much more evidence and avoid dissipation of energy and momentum.

The challenge was to roll out a new process AND also offer an optional technology solution. The primary concern was support for the process, but in many cases people were facing two challenges: a brand new appraisal and a completely new software tool.

We supported this through formal workshops and informal drop-in sessions. We operated an almost open door policy to individual staff and line-managers. This was a very time consuming process but we feel it paid dividends.

One of the key things we would have done differently was to be both more directive and prescriptive about how to fill in the PPDR itself. We felt that the flexibility and openness of the PebblePad environment would be seen as reassuring, but anecdotal and survey/drop-in session feedback suggested that many staff just wanted to be told exactly how to fill in the form, where to comment, exactly what constituted evidence, and how much
written text, and linked assets constituted proper and sufficient engagement. As the great Stomu Yamashta said ‘Freedom is Frightening’.

We would also have endorsed and pushed customisation of the documentation much more strongly had we known the impact this kind of ‘ownership’ would have. The variety of asset types in PebblePad offers a design freedom which we now push much more strongly. While we were aware at the start-up of the project that we were working at the limit of our staff capacity to both develop and support this work, we would have the confidence now to offer a variety of solutions for local customisation.

**In brief – making the case for PebblePad**

**Employability/CPD**

Using PebblePad to connect strategic performance management and professional development in an ongoing cycle of planning, reviewing and rethinking, offers flexible and agile support for enhancing lifelong learning and employability, and institutional strategic organizational development. The privacy and control of PebblePad as a Personal Learning Space (PLS) meshes well with the shared (but private) professional dialogue of an online appraisal process. The ‘living document’ and the ongoing nature of PDP fit together extremely well.

**Managing Organisational Process**

The scale of this project, involving all staff across the whole institution, meant that efficiency and sustainability were crucial concerns. PebblePad offered a common platform which many staff were familiar with, a manageable training threshold for those who had not use PebblePad before, and a large-scale effective way of deeply embedding digital literacy skills in a professional context.

To view this case study in an electronic format please visit this link:
www.pebblebash.co.uk/2012/pdf/cs01.pdf
Swansea Employability Award

Chris Cardew
Careers and Employability, Swansea University, UK

Chosen theme(s)

Learning: Employability

The background context

Employability skills and awareness are vital for our students; more vital is that they recognise these in themselves and can articulate experiences using skills to an employer.

At Swansea we piloted an Employability Skills Award (ESA) two years ago with some success. The ESA had three themes with a Careers Adviser taking responsibility for one employability theme each. The program was designed to be mainly class taught using a PebblePad webfolio for students to compile work for assessment. This worked well, but the numbers of students who could attend was limited to around 90.

The university administration decided that we should offer an employability award to all students, but there was only funding for one person to develop and coordinate the program.

Why PebblePad?

PebblePad has tools to support learning, in particular reflective learning, and also has all of the system design requirements needed for implementing this project. It is all online, secure, easy to manage very large numbers of students, easy for students to use, easy to give students feedback, and easy to gather statistics for the management to ponder. The University was already using PebblePad so there was no additional cost associated with its setup and use for this project. I could implement it all myself without having to rely on others, which has the potential to slow the whole thing down or delay it. I was able to have it up and running and tested inside two months, in time for the start of the new academic year.

The purpose

The Destination of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) showed Swansea in a poor light in relation to employability with some subjects having very low employability statistics. There was concern that prospective student numbers might drop. There was also an increasing sense of responsibility towards the students regarding their employability and not just on academic experience alone.
We wanted to offer all students the chance to participate in an employability award that, if completed, would be included on the Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR). This would be the added incentive.

By taking part in the award students are required to reflect on experiences they have had, and on the skills they have learnt and developed. They participate in a careers interview and a mock job interview, and then reflect on what they have learnt in each and identify further actions they need to take.

The approach

I was asked by the PVC for the Student Experience if I could create an employability award that was student driven and almost exclusively online. It was to be run by me alone and to be available by the start of the new academic year, only 2 months away.

I accepted the challenge and from 1st August set about designing the award, drawing on experience from the previous ESA pilot. With the ‘program design’ agreed, I created a ‘system design’, i.e. detail on how the award would be implemented, how students would be able to do it, etc. I was not aware of an existing model, so it had to be designed and implemented from scratch (Cardew, 2011).

The Swansea Employability Award (SEA) is fully online. There are two main modules to the SEA following registration. The first module involves finding out more about yourself: what you value in life, your personality type, your learning styles, what jobs might suit you; and then marketing yourself by creating a CV and covering letter. The module finishes with an interview with a Careers Adviser.

The second module is about gaining experiences. These experiences may follow on from the first module and can include work experiences, volunteering, positions of responsibility, and so on. The second module finishes with a mock job interview.

For each element of the two modules participants need to record their experiences and thoughts in relation to their career. PebblePad forms are used to scaffold this reflection and these are saved to a gateway for Personal Tutors (PTs) to access when necessary. The PTs are then asked to verify that the student did have the experiences that they reflected upon. The philosophy behind this is not that we don’t trust the students, but that we feel that it will encourage PTs to spend more time with their students and also act as an introduction to PebblePad.


The result

The SEA was launched in time for the new academic year 2011/12. The target was for 200 students to register within the year. By Feb 5, 2012, 230 students had registered, with 10 already having completed. The university marketing team were keen to have case studies early on and as a result interviewed the first two who completed the award: http://bit.ly/pb201201
To maintain the philosophy of the SEA which is to keep it open to any student, over 40 interviewers have been recruited from staff across campus. These are people who are trained and experienced in interviewing in their particular field and have offered their services to the SEA to be mock job interviewers. The mock interview is at the end of the SEA and is driven by the student who books an interview when they are ready and the interviewer allocated for that day will interview them. The interviews are generic, i.e. not job specific, so there is no need to collect information about the student or to get them to apply for a fictitious job vacancy. The questions are geared strongly towards skills used and developed during interviews as this is a key area that employers say is missing when they interview graduates.

At the annual Careers Fair a sponsorship proposal was presented to many of the organisations attending. As a result, one very high profile employer is keen to be a sponsor, not only providing some much need funding for marketing, but also offering skills sessions linking to the SEA.

The impact

The impact for the student population will not be evident until students graduate and we monitor the DLHE, comparing those students who completed the SEA to those that have graduate work.

The impact for me was that I very quickly got to know many people across campus from academics, to marketing, to the registry; raising the profile of Careers and Employability in the process.

Lessons learnt

- Have the confidence to do something unique that can make a difference to each student.
- Gaining any kind of technical support is difficult. PebblePad enables you to do this kind of thing without the need for any IT assistance from others.
- It is important to make it as easy as possible for the students to use the interface to the award.
- I would concentrate more on upfront design of program and then design of the process, including in detail which PebblePad tools to use. This link is to a ‘reflection’ on how I am helping others to implement awards within the university: http://bit.ly/pb201202

This talks a lot about design and not so much about PebblePad, but it is a reminder that PebblePad is a box of tools to support learning and teaching. I am often asked by academic members of staff to demonstrate PebblePad to students, which to me is a futile task. It is a bit like showing someone a plumber’s toolkit, one person might have a look inside, pick up a tool and think what on earth can I do with this? Someone else might say to themselves, ‘Maybe I can use this to undo a tap that needs fixing’. Yet another person will go and read a manual on plumbing and then be happy to use most of the tools with an understanding of their use and what they have been designed for. Most students do not bother when left to their own devices. **Staff need to take the lead always.**
Ideally I would like to have more contact with students and get them to create webfolios to reflect on experiences, involve Personal Tutors more, and even embed it into the curriculum. The latter is already happening in some subject areas.

In brief – making the case for PebblePad

- I was able to offer the employability award to **ALL** students.
- Employability is a ‘learning orientation’ – a student cannot simply pass an exam and say they are now employable. Unfortunately, for the majority of students education is a ‘grade orientation’ (the opposite of a learning orientation). The culture is about passing exams, and in many cases the bare minimum needed. Learning orientation is about continuous and deep learning, and reflecting on learning underpins this. PebblePad tools support this learning in a unique and effective way.
- No paper – it is sustainable.
- Excellent support from the PebblePad people when needed.
- So easy to use – I like it so much I used a webfolio to track everything that I have done since the start of the project: [http://bit.ly/pb201203](http://bit.ly/pb201203)

References:


To view this case study in an electronic format please visit this link:
www.pebblebash.co.uk/2012/pdf/cs02.pdf
ePortfolio based learning for accountants... Does it add up?

Rachel Challen¹, Lorraine Howell², Lisa McKeown² and Emma Purnell¹
¹Blended Learning Unit and ²Wolverhampton Business School, The University of Wolverhampton, UK

Chosen theme(s)

Learning: Reflection, Graduate Attributes (Digital Literacy)
Teaching/Professional practice: Managing e-Assessment
Organisation: Retention

The background context

This case study centres on a level 4, core accountancy module based in the Finance and Business department in the Wolverhampton Business School and currently taught on campus only. The module aims to give students the basic accounting skills and knowledge that will underpin a successful progression through, and completion of, their three year degree programme. It is, therefore, a vitally important module for staff and students. This is also the first module the students study after starting University, so there are many other concerns to consider: transition, retention, academic skills development, and pastoral support.

First year, first semester, first module students may not have the confidence in a lecture room scenario to ask questions to clarify their thinking and due to this, struggling students can remain invisible until obtaining a low pass rate at the summative exam. To exacerbate the issue, the volume of learners undertaking this module makes individual, face-to-face interactions between tutor and student, problematic.

This specific module has a large cohort, based over 4 tutor groups with 2 tutors running, delivering and assessing the module. The module has a 50% case study exam based summative assessment, which is a requirement from the professional body.

Why PebblePad?

The benefit of using PebblePad in the context of this core, level 4 module was the ability to keep all the learning together in one place and included personal, academic and subject specific learning. The design allows for incremental feed-forward to happen with dialogic potential so that students were able to develop their skills and knowledge ongoing with the support and guidance of subject specialist tutors.

The purpose

The introduction of the PebblePad webfolio coincided with the Learning Works curriculum design, implemented in 2010, which moved from 8 x 15 credit modules per
annum to 6 x 20 credits. This gave the tutors the opportunity to re-evaluate the existing module structure and design and introduce methods and approaches which would more effectively address the issues highlighted above. Additionally, within this framework, it was no longer possible to run a separate learning skills module. The necessary skills learnt in that module previously needed to be incorporated within an accounting module, and as this module is one of the first accounting modules taken, it seemed logical to embed the skills work within this. Hence the two assessments measure very different things – the webfolio focusing on the learning skills and the end of module exam on the basic double entry book-keeping.

The new module design aimed to build in a process of encouraging and supporting student subject, personal and academic skills progression, monitored weekly by the tutors, helping to identify any potential issues and struggling students at any stage during the module. The most challenging change to the existing design was the introduction of reflective practice, a skill not normally developed or required in a ‘hard’ subject.

The rationale for developing a three-stranded skills progressive approach was to prepare students for the end of module exam by breaking down the module into weekly tasks: addressing the book-keeping and academic skills required which built up student skills in chunks, allowing the tutor to address any issues in class, with either a whole group or single student. The addition of reflective practice weaved throughout the weeks enabled the tutors to start to have more of an understanding of their students and enabled an empathetic relationship to grow.

The approach

The University’s Blended Learning Unit worked closely with the tutors, discussing and pooling expertise on pedagogical benefits, technical opportunities and practical considerations. Importantly, the model that was eventually developed evolved from what the tutors wanted to achieve and wasn’t initially based on a particular tool.

However, as discussions advanced, it became patently clear that PebblePad would support everything that that the tutors needed to succeed with the new design and also add the extra value that students are also engaged with PebblePad on their first module at the University. This ultimately gives them the opportunity to build their eportfolio assets from an early stage in their academic career and may encourage them to continue building their asset store throughout their time at the University, allowing the creation of richer job applications and CVs, based on their personal and subject knowledge growth and all supported by evidence.

The tutors initially required a design that developed a weekly case study approach, which could help students to increase their academic skills and importantly the reflective practice element had to weave throughout all the academic and skills learning.

The first iteration of the design involved a comprehensive webfolio designed by the tutors, involving subject information and weekly tasks. The tasks revolved around the three core requirements of the design: case study, study skills and reflection. Each strand related directly to a blog which was embedded in the webfolio. At the beginning of the module,
the students were asked to take a copy of the webfolio and publish their own copy to an
assessment gateway.

Wherever possible the study skills activities were linked to work needed on other
modules, e.g. planning an approach and outline for an assignment was timed to prompt
work on the Business Management report that BAAF students were required to submit
in Week 8 of the course. The challenge was to make the webfolio relevant – a criticism
often directed at the previous stand-alone module.

Given the volume of students to tutors, the major stakeholders were the staff who were
willing to take a risk with their curriculum, wanting and embracing a different way to
support student development and assessment. Also integral to the success of the new
design implementation was their willingness to give feedback and consistent support
electronically. Naturally, the other stakeholders were the students and other tutors within
the Finance and Business department who had the opportunity to continue weaving a
PebblePad methodology throughout other modules. An important stakeholder was the
software provider as if the platform was not stable at this point in time, the students
would lose confidence in using the platform and be wary of engaging with it throughout
the rest of their time at the University. It was the intention to introduce the platform at a
crucial time in their learning and it was important to get all the elements right.

The result

The team worked towards a cohesive design of a learning environment which crossed
boundaries between subject, personal and skills development.

The design achieved the increased initial submission of work. The module design
ensured that all student webfolios were submitted within the first 2 weeks of the
module. This early submission of the student’s own webfolio made their weekly work,
and understanding of the subject, transparent. This was intended to allow any required
interventions to be made quickly and before the situation was non-recoverable. The
student work was available for tutor comment from early on and throughout the module.
This approach meant that students who may have struggled invisibly throughout the
module previously and then either failed the exam or left the course could be identified
as at risk early enough to assist them.

However, due to the lack of strict interim submission deadlines in the first year of
operation, there was a hard core of students who left too much work [particularly the
case study accounting tasks, which took students a long time to type up, and were not
uploaded regularly] to the last minute – in many cases the day of the deadline itself - and
who therefore failed to complete all tasks set. This resulted in a high failure rate in the
first year of operation [around 50%], although the pass-rate for the exam was nearer
80%.

The project started 2 years ago and has just finished its second iteration. A definite
design evolved over the 2 years with the second year taking on board all the reflections
from the first iteration and applying them to the second. For instance, to align with the
exam component, the use of weekly PebblePad quizzes ensured an element of testing
with feedback was done regularly and kept in the same place to help students to see synoptic links between their learning and the weekly quiz results, and enabling them to quickly go back to specific items for revision purposes. The weekly quizzes were much better than the case study tasks – they did not take as long to do and there were specific weekly deadlines for each quiz to be submitted to the gateway, so the students engaged with the webfolio on a weekly basis. They were therefore much more likely to work on other tasks on a regular basis, rather than leave it all to the last minute. The benefits were seen in the pass rate of around 80% for the webfolio in the second year of operation – much better than the first year.

Having run 2 iterations, the third iteration is now in design and will, undoubtedly, also undergo this reflective feed forward process.

The impact

Teaching/Professional practise: Managing eAssessment

The first year of operation saw an initial failure rate of around 50% on the webfolio due to students leaving too much work, particularly the case study, to the last minute. The weekly quizzes in year two, with their inbuilt deadlines, introduced a sense of urgency to the webfolio work and were also easier for students to complete promptly; the pass rate was around 80% for the webfolio in the second year. However the exam pass rate has been consistently high at around 80% both years – largely due to the subject mastery built up first by the case study exercises and then the weekly quizzes. The quizzes were good preparation for the multiple choice section of the final end of module exam, as instant feedback on performance was provided automatically. The lessons learnt by the tutors in the way that the assessment was designed and feedback given has had impact year by year on the developing design within this module. It is also used by the Blended Learning team as an exemplar of best practice within the institution and the principles of this design can be seen in a number of modules in the University.

Organisation: Retention

Although the impact of any process on retention is always difficult to measure, the preemptive nature of the intervention, the weekly contact, building of relationships, and knowledge gap analysis have all had a positive impact on the running of the module, and have enabled students in trouble to be identified – possibly even before they knew they were!

Learning: Reflection, Graduate attributes (Digital Literacy)

The tutors found that introducing the students to PebblePad actually increased the students’ confidence in using the subject specific software, and this was a major influence in increasing the digital literacy skills within the cohort. The impact of embedding reflective practice in this design may not be evident until later in this course. However, encouraging early understanding and exploration of reflection in budding academics is as important as any immediate or measured impact.
Lessons learnt

- The importance of setting ground rules and having clear expectations of the students, yourself and the curriculum.
- Barriers can sometimes be the logistics of coordinating such large groups into lab style sessions to ensure everyone is comfortable with the technology. Across the developmental cycles of this practice it was found that detailed and bespoke help materials can go a long way in supporting students in developing their webfolios. You need to ensure students are clear about what reflection is and time spent on differentiating reflection from review can be very beneficial.
- There is also a danger in assuming that all students are IT literate from the beginning – more mature students and overseas students were not as conversant with the technology and needed more support. It was pleasing to note the development of skills over the first semester – these same students were more confident in tackling Sage than they perhaps would have been without the PebblePad experience [evidence from discussion with one student in particular].

In brief – making the case for PebblePad

- Enhance learning potential by scaffolding reflection and supporting digital literacy.
- Develop assessment design to manage and support dialogic e-assessment for large cohorts.
- Improve retention through early identification of students at risk via weekly tasks.

To view this case study in an electronic format please visit this link:
www.pebblebash.co.uk/2012/pdf/cs03.pdf
Four fab ideas – including marking on iPads and the ‘why?’ question

Robert Chmielewski
University of Edinburgh, UK

Chosen theme(s)

**Learning**: Reflection, Graduate Attributes, Employability
**Teaching/Professional practice**: Managing e-Assessment
**Organisation**: Environmental Impact

The background context

These case studies and examples are drawn from various schools and departments across the University of Edinburgh. It is important to note that most of what is described only went live in the last few months.

At the University of Edinburgh, PebblePad is centrally supported and offered to all students and staff members. In my professional role, I am advising on how educators can enhance their current practices and setups using the PebblePad system. By introducing the system to new groups of users, I learn more about the critical factors for a successful implementation. I am very fortunate to be working with enthusiastic and passionate academics and administration colleagues who are coordinating these projects locally while making use of my ‘central’ PebblePad advice and support.

Why PebblePad?

This snapshot of some of the recent PebblePad-linked projects illustrates the diversity of areas which can benefit from using the system. It also demonstrates how flexible the system can be when coping with tasks that normally belong to the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) area (assignment collection).

The case studies/examples

This review covers four recent and some very recent PebblePad-linked initiatives at the University of Edinburgh:

1. School of Law – collection and marking of all assignments
2. Nursing Studies – submitting e-dissertations and developing professional eportfolios
3. EUSA Volunteering Log – logging reflection and volunteering hours
4. MyEdGE and WAVE webfolios – recording skills developed through a variety of experiences
The approach

The number of courses and programmes using PebblePad at the University of Edinburgh is growing. However, almost all of them use the system differently. They range from collecting and marking assignments online to recording reflection about extra-curricular activities. These four examples document a small variety of ideas for which PebblePad can be used at a university.

1. School of Law
(A group of projects coordinated locally by Gillian Black, James Chalmers, Caroline Colliston, Nick Dyson and Jessica McCraw)

During the first semester of 2011/12 the School selected PebblePad as its assignment collection tool. This covers all Undergraduate (UG), Postgraduate (PG), PhD and Centre for Professional Legal Studies students as well as early career and contract researchers.

Students are using PebblePad to upload and submit their assignments to relevant gateways. The School of Law is now using a total of 150 gateways for each semester; most gateways have at least five tutorial groups. Hundreds of submissions are sent during normal teaching weeks. The gateways are at their busiest around major work deadlines when 1000’s of files are submitted.

Once the assignments are submitted, the gateways are locked automatically at the deadline. In order to keep the process fully digital, most markers are using iPad tablet devices to open and read the assignments. If necessary, they can insert in-line comments by converting documents into pdf files and re-submitting them as attachments to feedback comments. All submissions appear anonymous to markers who sometimes use the grade field to indicate their progress while marking (especially when working with huge numbers of files). Many PG dissertations are double-marked with internal comments exchanged via the validation functionality. Once the final grades and comments have been agreed, they are released to students through PebblePad by a course admin person. UG submissions are marked using a structured feedback form which was built in the Form Builder. All work submitted via PebblePad is also submitted to Turnitin to identify potential plagiarism. PebblePad does not at present allow for Turnitin reports to be anonymised. These, therefore, are not automatically made available to examiners. Instead, the Teaching Office and Postgraduate Office review the PebblePad reports and notify examiners. The examiner is then asked to review the originality report produced by PebblePad and advise on whether this creates any cause for concern requiring further investigation.

Accessing PebblePad gateways on iPads is seamless through the locally authenticated gateway ‘direct login’ link where tutors can log straight into the gateways area, skipping the Flash interface altogether.

This official and compulsory use of PebblePad allowed students to get familiar with the system and encouraged many course organisers to introduce more activities on top of collecting essays and dissertations. These include:
• gateway blogs for posting extra material and links for students;
• recording PhD progress using individual blogs shared between PhD students and their supervisors;
• School-wide competitions where participants can submit their entries via open-for-all gateway blogs;
• webfolios used for collaborative projects and group work;
• mentoring of early career and contract researchers via the log tool.

This big group of new initiatives is expected to be evaluated at the end of the 2011/12 academic year. The students, the academic staff and the admin support will be consulted on future improvements to the initial setup.

2. Nursing Studies
(Projects coordinated by Anne Robertson and Jillian Taylor)

Within Nursing Studies at all levels, professional requirements mandate the need for the maintenance of documentation to demonstrate competencies and experiences as well as illustrate academic performance and practical skills. Therefore, recording artefacts relating to academic/professional progress is a key component of their study.

Digital essays/dissertations

The first group of Nursing Studies students who were introduced to PebblePad in 2009 included postgraduate students taking part in the MSc in Advancing Nursing Practice programme. Within that programme the traditional ‘supervised reading’ component was replaced with PebblePad webfolios (worth 20, 40 or 60 credits). Each student was given detailed guidance before they started work on their webfolios. The personal and reflective nature of compiling a webfolio allowed students to deploy more flexible ways of presenting the topic of their self-directed study. In their collection, students compiled text, multimedia (pictures, sound and hyperlinks to video clips). Students developed and submitted the webfolios for assessment.

Assessment of webfolios is based on the same criteria as used for marking paper-based work. For example, elements such as referencing, cohesion and arguments are considered as well as the overall integrity of the piece of work. ePortfolio marking guidelines have been designed which highlight the importance of reflecting professional/personal growth, including evidence of self-reflection and assessment and identifying future professional/personal development.

From these early steps, the proposed new curriculum for UG and PG nursing students has seen many paper-based activities related to professional development and reflective learning being gradually converted so that they can be conducted through the eportfolio system. Therefore at the moment all traditional PG and UG nursing assignments (essays and dissertations) are submitted via PebblePad gateways.
Nursing Practice ePortfolio

This is an ongoing pilot project that started in February 2012. Selected students were offered an option of completing some sections of their paper-based nursing practice portfolio via PebblePad. As most of the sections of the portfolio need to be signed off by the NHS mentors, the students have been equipped with on-loan netbooks (including 3G dongles) which they can carry to their practical sessions at hospitals.

A webfolio consisting of all the relevant online versions of the forms was created (using the Form Builder). Some sections of the webfolio can only be edited by mentors. Each form is individually signed off by a mentor, while the academic tutor is overseeing the whole process through the gateway.

In order to minimise the network usage, the webfolios are accessed and edited directly through the gateway (no need for loading up the ‘data heavy’ Flash interface).

By the end of the 2011/12 academic year, the project should produce useful feedback (from students, mentors and academic tutors) on how this new approach can be improved and expanded.

3. EUSA Volunteering Log
(Project coordinated by Hilary Wardle)

Edinburgh University Students’ Association is coordinating many types of volunteering activities for students. In order to recognise students’ hard work and contribution to their communities, the association has recently introduced the Edinburgh Award. Once documented, the students’ achievements in this area will appear on their degree transcripts (HEAR).

PebblePad is being used to record and archive the details of each participant’s volunteering journey. Using the Activity Log tool, students have a set goal of at least 30 hours which they need to document in detail.

There are two face-to-face sessions (one at the beginning of the process, one at the end). In between, students are recording their volunteering activities and taking part in two online self-reflective exercises (structured forms with self-assessment sections, goals and questions which are to be ‘sent to’ their logs). All the logs are monitored through the gateway by the project supervisor.

The pilot of the award started in February 2012 (ending in April 2012) and students are officially required to carry out 30 hours of volunteering during that time. If the pilot is successful, an expanded version will be run next year which should see volunteers log 100 hours over the course of an academic year.
4. MyEdGE and WAVE Webfolio
(Projects coordinated by Gavin McCabe)

These webfolios are available to all University of Edinburgh students through a gateway (in the main gateway so that they can be copied by all users).

The MyEdGE Webfolio focuses on ‘Graduate Attributes’ – the range of skills, abilities and approaches students can develop during their time at the University of Edinburgh. Recognising and taking control of their development should help give students the ‘Edinburgh Edge’ – the journey from the students they are to the graduates they want to be.

The MyEdGE webfolio consists of:

- the Bigger Section section (explaining the Graduate Attributes Framework and the concepts of Enquiry & Lifelong Learning, Aspiration & Personal Development, and Outlook & Engagement);
- the Graduate Attributes profile tool (with question sets and self-rating scales);
- the MyEdGE blog which can be used to record thoughts about the process of developing graduate attributes.

The WAVE webfolio is a resource that helps students make the most of any Work And Volunteering Experiences they may have while at University by focussing on their personal progress.

All students can take a copy of the webfolio which features:

- the WAVE Graduate Attributes – rating oneself against individual skills and abilities that may relate to their work;
- the WAVE Blog – noting thoughts related to work experiences;
- Further Resources – a separate informative webfolio with links and content about various work and volunteering-related issues.

The use of the MyEdGE and WAVE templates is not mandatory. However, they are now officially recommended to students by our Careers Services (Employability) department.

The result and lessons learnt

Since the introduction of PebblePad at the University of Edinburgh in 2009 I have been focusing on expanding its usage across the institution. Over time, I have come up with some observations on the critical success factors. This recent group of projects have consolidated my views on how PebblePad can be utilised more widely and efficiently.

There are always three groups of participants that need to be fully aware of why the tool is being introduced (or even why there is a need for a new tool to be introduced): the students; the academic staff; and the admin support. The answer to the ‘why?’ question is the most crucial here. There always should be a clear reason that is understood by
all the three parties. However, the answer to that question may be different depending upon the group. Using the School of Law as an example, I will try to answer the ‘Why?’ question:

- **Academic staff:**
  Why? ….. because PebblePad provides me with seamless access to all my students’ work through my iPad

- **Admin support:**
  Why? ….. because we have full control over the assignment collecting process and everything can be easily archived

- **Students:**
  Why? ….. because PebblePad gives me a secure space for all my assignments and feedback from all my courses/years

Again, all the three groups need to know their role in the process – and the technical part should be simplified to the maximum. PebblePad is a complex tool, but it should be presented as a very simple and obvious solution. When introducing PebblePad to a new group, one cannot afford to spend too much time on explaining the complex technology. Once more, I believe that most of the introduction time should be spent on answering the ‘Why?’ question. For example, if a marker is only interested in viewing assignments, they should be able to log straight into the gateway area. In the Nursing Studies case, when accessing webfolios using limited connectivity (3G network), the webfolio interface should be as light as possible. When asking students to keep a log (the volunteering example), although it is very easy to create one in PebblePad, the activity log can be pre-structured and distributed to all students through the ‘copy and auto-publish’ route. It removes an extra step and leaves more time for the ‘Why?’ question.

**Perfect conditions for a personal learning space**

When it comes to creating the perfect conditions for widening the use of PebblePad, it seems that the best starting point is to make it compulsory for students to submit their assignments to PebblePad gateways (e.g. the School of Law case). Using this route, students and staff become extremely familiar with the system very quickly. Introducing further reflective or extra-curricular activities is then far more straightforward as the vehicle is already there. Moreover, I strongly believe that any personal learning space is incomplete without these important ‘fruits of education’ – essays and dissertations with relevant feedback and grades.

This again, allows us to draw an even more convincing case when presenting PebblePad to students. When all their learning artefacts are orderly kept in one space, attaching them as evidence to their graduate attributes, and eventually creating an insightful CV becomes far more seamless and efficient (leaving some students with more time to spend on Facebook!).

To view this case study in an electronic format please visit this link:
www.pebblebash.co.uk/2012/pdf/cs04.pdf
Using e-workbooks with health care students in Higher Education

Asanka Dayandanda and Agi Ryder
Centre for Learning and Quality Enhancement, Middlesex University, UK

Chosen theme(s)

Teaching/Professional practice: Programme/Course Development, Managing e-Assessment
Organisation: Student Satisfaction, Retention

The background context

As an alternative to the traditional printed workbook, online electronic workbooks or “e-workbooks” have recently been introduced at Middlesex University’s School of Health and Social Science. The e-workbooks integrate exciting and varied multimedia learning content into an individualised online workspace where students read, listen to, watch, and interact with learning materials and save their responses to workbook activities online.

Used in conjunction with face to face lectures, the e-workbook approach has been adopted for both formative and summative assessment purposes. In addition to retaining some of the features of printed workbooks, e-workbooks can prove to be an efficient method of monitoring progress and engagement with workbook activities and providing more frequent and timely formative feedback.

E-workbooks, just as printed workbooks, are designed to guide independent learning away from the classroom. Students have the opportunity to work at their own pace at any time, from anywhere with internet access.

This case study presents initial findings of a project that is investigating the implementation of e-workbooks at Middlesex University and is attempting to explore the influence of e-workbooks on monitoring student progress, delivering formative feedback, and guiding students’ independent learning. By analysing views and experiences expressed by students and higher education lecturers on the recent deployment of e-workbooks at Middlesex University, this study aims to further explore and enhance the role played by e-workbooks in teaching and learning practice.

Why PebblePad?

The e-workbook approach of providing students with an individualised online workspace to replace the traditional printed paper based workbook was made possible by PebblePad.
PebblePad allows online monitoring of e-workbooks by academics and practice supervisors whenever it is necessary, without stopping or hindering students from continuing to work on their workbooks. This flexibility allows tutors to engage with student work at any time from any place. Work can be marked from home or on the go, and there is no need to carry heavy folders around or organise meetings to see students just to see their workbooks. Tracking students’ progress helps to identify struggling learners in time to provide support (learning or subject related) and to provide more personal and timely formative feedback.

Learners can also access and update their workbook from any place, at any time. They have direct access to resources and their feedback is delivered instantly.

The webfolio function in PebblePad allows lecturers to create workbook templates containing pages embedded with videos, audio, and other resource links, as well as areas for students to record responses to questions and to keep learning journals. The webfolio template functions as a reusable learning object (RLO). While time and effort may initially be required to create the e-workbook template, subsequent use with future student cohorts makes the initial effort very worthwhile. The electronic templates can be easily made available to unlimited numbers of students.

PebblePad can be integrated with the University’s Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), which reduces the technical barriers to accessing the e-workbooks. Users do not need to remember extra usernames and passwords and, once logged onto the VLE, students can access their personal e-workbooks on the class gateway in just two clicks.

Reducing printing costs for both students and for the department is one of the positive outcomes of this approach. In modules with large numbers of students, this cost saving over time is quite substantial.

The purpose

There were a variety of reasons for introducing e-workbooks in different modules:

- To find a more efficient way of monitoring student progress during the module run;
- To take advantage of the flexible nature - any time and any place - of online workbooks;
- To look at efficient ways of providing formative feedback in a timely manner that could lead to improving student learning;
- To reduce the marking burden by employing a gradual and consistent feedback approach over a longer period;
- To encourage students to regularly reflect on their progress;
- To find ways of increasing student engagement with online electronic journals and library resources;
- To find a way for students to retain access to learning materials after a module run and even after leaving the University (Currently students lose access to learning materials kept in the VLE once the module has finished. Continuing access after the module enables students to refer back to previous modules. e-Workbooks
being housed in the students’ personal space in contrast to an institutional space (the VLE) develops a sense of ownership and enables students to construct their knowledge and create links between acquired knowledge in different modules);

- To support the institutional drive for increasing e-assessment and e-feedback opportunities.

The approach

Academics were introduced to the opportunities offered by e-workbooks through two hour e-workbook staff development sessions. They collaborated with the educational development unit to:

- structure and create webfolio templates (e-workbooks) with interactive content and activities;
- set up gateways;
- conduct student induction sessions where the students copy the template into their personal PebblePad and publish to the course gateway to share their work with module leaders. These sessions also served to familiarise students with accessing their workbooks, filling them in, receiving feedback, and sharing them with practice supervisors (non-PebblePad users).

This case study considers e-workbooks used in several departments across the School of Health and Social Sciences, including Criminology and Sociology, Mental Health, Social Work and Interprofessional Learning, Midwifery, Child Health and Primary Care, Natural Sciences, Psychology, and Social Science. The following examples provide a flavour of the variety of ways in which e-workbooks have been implemented in different modules.

CMH 2110 Diagnostic Skills Workbook

Student cohort: approximately 50 second year complementary health students

This e-workbook is used to guide independent learning. The workbook is embedded with images and multimedia files of various conditions such as heart and lung sounds, and video clips showing ideal gait and gait defects. The students complete exercises as they progress through the module. Their responses are discussed during lectures and feedback is given at a group level.

Previously the diagnostic skills workbook consisted of a series of pdf worksheets that were released to students through the VLE together with their weekly lectures. Students were expected to print out the worksheets to complete them. Some images and links to resources were provided via the VLE and some videos were shown in lectures. The worksheets and external resources were not directly linked.
MWY 3440 Neuro-Behavioural Physiological Assessment of the Newborn

Student cohort: 27 third year midwifery students

- Clinical Workbook
  This e-workbook contains instructions on carrying out and recording an assessment of a newborn baby. The e-workbook contains an example of a completed assessment form to guide students. The rest of the e-workbook consists of 70 assessment forms the students have to complete as part of their training. Students are required to submit the assessment forms as evidence of competency to fulfil the summative component of this module. These forms guide students to carry out and record cases they encounter in the practice situations. Each assessment form has a section for the student to record their reflections and also receive formative feedback comments from the module leader.

  Previously students compiled and submitted a paper portfolio composed of the patient assessment sheets and their reflections of each case. Formative guidance on assessment forms was provided through face to face meetings with the module leader.

- Session Worksheets
  E-workbooks are used to provide end of session worksheets for completion. The e-workbook contains a reading list with direct access to library resources and full text of electronic journal articles. The workbooks are formatively marked and feedback is given through the e-workbook.

  The previous approach was downloadable worksheets from VLE.

NIP 1002 Foundations for Nursing Practice

Student cohort: 450 1st year BSc Nursing students

The e-workbook contains post-session worksheets drawing on material covered in lectures and lab sessions. As this is a very large cohort, several module group leaders monitor and provide feedback on completed assessments as students progress through the module. This allows the group leaders to identify students who are struggling and offer them appropriate support.

  Previously this was done using paper workbooks and worksheets. Group leaders had no transparent way of identifying struggling students or offering formative feedback in a timely fashion.

PGDip Mental Health Practice

Student cohort: 50 trainee mental health students

The practice portfolio consists of guidance material, worksheets, learning and supervision journals, and attendance records. It is completed by the student but the completion of
the work is guided and overseen by the practice supervisor who carries the responsibility for checking and signing off the completed document.

Previously this was achieved using paper based portfolios. Students had to carry around large and heavy folders and arrange a time to meet with practice supervisors to discuss and sign the necessary documents. University based module leaders could not easily identify and help struggling students.

The result

Up to 20 different e-workbooks are currently being used at Middlesex University by over 650 students. In the current academic year over 1700 copies of individual workbooks have been made by students and shared with educators. These e-workbooks have served as exemplars to other academics, with increasing numbers showing an interest in adopting a similar approach in their teaching practice.

The impact

Staff and students involved in the project were surveyed. The following is a summary of initial findings.

Feedback from tutors

- Lecturers appreciate that they have instant access to student work, can monitor progress, and can provide instant feedback.
- The e-workbooks have increased the workload of some tutors as they spend more time monitoring progress and providing feedback.
- Monitoring students’ learning has revealed a need for addressing the lack of independent study skills in many students.
- The e-workbooks have enabled the identification of students struggling academically at an early stage. This may allow interventional support to reach students in time to help them meet the required academic standards, and thus may improve course retention rates.

Feedback from students

- The e-workbooks increased independent study. Over 80%, more than 90 respondents, agreed that e-workbooks served to guide their learning.

  “Encourages self-learning and lets you access work wherever you are. Allows you to learn at your own pace”

- The e-workbooks helped in their transition to technology-enhanced learning and allowed them to access learning content at any time and from anywhere with internet access.
“… I am an older student and previously a technophobe, however I have made a big effort to engage with e-learning and keep up. I am impressed with myself. Advantage is that I can work at my own pace, maybe 5 hours late at night or 20 minutes in the day.”

- There was overall consensus among participants that the e-workbooks allowed regular reflection on progress and a means of identifying gaps in learning.
- There was a growing awareness of the benefits of having lecturers monitor work and provide feedback online, with the feedback helping them to focus on the topics.
- Where workbooks provided links to library resources and electronic journal articles, over 80% of respondents agreed that these links encouraged engagement with library resources and research findings. They liked the interactive resource links embedded in the workbook and the structure the workbooks provided to guide their learning.

“The advantages I see in using the e-workbooks are: the pre-session work helps me prepare for the lecture I will be having, making me more alert in class having an insight into what will be taught; the post-session work helps my continuous reading; and been able to access online materials through my library and other links is a great benefit.”

Lessons learnt

Feedback from tutors

- Some staff need to develop stronger IT skills and gain more experience working with PebblePad.
- Extra time might need to be negotiated to manage the extra workload in creating e-workbooks, marking online, and providing regular individual feedback.

“Staff workload needs to be considered particularly with monitoring. Very resource dependent.”

- Some workbooks need to be redesigned as the amount of work expected from students is too much and students feel overburdened.

“Make sure that they are not given too much to do in the workbook, therefore as a tutor I need to think very carefully about what is included in the workbook and what the students need to get out of this.”

- Some of the resources need to be updated for future cohorts, possibly including more diagrams and multimedia material.
- The level of student responses and the time needed to read and comment on work has been underestimated. Introducing word count limits for students might be considered in future.
• Lecturers have identified that some students are copying and pasting large chunks of text from books and other electronic resources directly into their e-workbooks without actually thinking about and digesting the learning content. Additional student guidance on paraphrasing and plagiarism may be required. To deter students from doing this Turnitin integration with PebblePad is being considered.

Feedback from students

• Some students do not like using computers and prefer paper workbooks. Although the workbooks are accessible from anywhere with an internet connection, some students did not regard them as portable as a paper notebook that they could just take around with them. They also pointed out that they could not add diagrams or format their answers.

“To be honest, I do not agree with using e-workbooks. I think doing work in a paper based workbook would make things a lot easier for many people in my class including myself. I am lucky that I have previous experience working with computers but others do not and are still finding it difficult to complete the work online.”

• There were concerns around replacing tutor time with online resources.

“It should NOT replace tutor contact time. As useful a tool it is as a supplement to the classroom, it should not be used in place of this. The idea of attending a traditional university over for example the Open University, is that students have space and a platform to share ideas and experiences, to discuss, learn and debate. This cannot be undertaken on [the VLE] as effectively.”

• There were some technical problems with a number of students reporting losing work due to PebblePad timing out, and several suggested the need for a spell checker.

• Need for more interactive elements.

“I love diagrams in anatomy books. It would be good to have interactive diagrams, perhaps of fetal circulation or breakdown of red blood cells to form bilirubin.”

• Students generally were wary of the volume of work required from them. This issue needs to be considered carefully in future and there needs to be an attempt to streamline the questions more and reduce the amount of work required from students each week as the unreasonable workload can be very demotivating for the learners.

“All are helpful to a degree but also A LOT of work and A LOT of pressure which just add to the work load.”
• Some strategic learners did not regard completing the workbooks important where the workbooks were not assessed.
• Need for more regular/instant feedback and a more transparent link with the material covered in class was pointed out. At the moment, model answers are not provided, although where workbooks are used by smaller cohorts and for summative assessments individual feedback is given regularly. For larger cohorts using workbooks for formative learning, lecturers are not always able to provide continuous individual feedback on each workbook. Students expressed a need for in class opportunities to discuss the more problematic aspects of the subjects covered in e-workbooks and to link it to the work they do when in class.

In brief – making the case for PebblePad

• PebblePad allowed students to engage with the e-workbook activities while the technology itself could stay in the background.
• Tutors were able to monitor student progress at any time, from any place and allocate necessary support.
• The timely feedback motivated students to continue to engage with their subject.
• Unlike paper based workbooks non-engagement with e-workbooks is easily detected allowing this issue to be tackled.

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank all the academic staff involved in the development and implementation of e-workbooks including Dr Lily Holman, Margaret Herlihy, Mike Bater, Tessa King, Justin McDermott, Stephanie Michaelides, Helen Mathesan, Tabitha Lewis, Kate Ambrose, Mary Clark, Jassen Lee, Dr Palitha Seerasinghe, and members of teaching teams involved with e-workbooks.

The authors would also thank all the Middlesex University students and staff that provided feedback that contributed to this case study.

To view this case study in an electronic format please visit this link:
www.pebblebash.co.uk/2012/pdf/cs05.pdf
Taking it to the next step: Managing large-scale, meaningful e-assessment in new curricula.

Linsey Duncan-Pitt¹ and Debra Holmes²
¹Interdisciplinary & Multimedia Learning and ²School of Health & Wellbeing Multimedia Unit, University of Wolverhampton, UK

Chosen theme(s)

Teaching/Professional Practice: Managing e-Assessment

The background context

This is an interprofessional learning (IPL) module delivered on three geographically distant centres. The module focuses on research awareness and is one of three IPL modules located within nursing, midwifery and social work undergraduate awards, this one being delivered in semester one of year one in the nursing and midwifery programmes. Further IPL modules will be offered in year two and year three.

Twenty tutorial groups of mixed professions were created from a cohort of 360+ students. A particular design feature was the creation of placement related interprofessional groups, which meant students were allocated based on placement area rather than usual site of study. This meant that students who had not met face-to-face were brought together through online discussion tools.

The module constituted 36 hours of content delivery over 6 weeks of which only 6 hours (3 X 2 hours) was face-to-face with a dedicated facilitator per group. The majority of the content was delivered through the institutional Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) using multimedia rich materials and focused online learning activities to build skills required for research appreciation and literature retrieval. Development of reflective skills was a small component of this introductory module and reflective tasks were achieved through use of PebblePad and our own VLE. Face-to-face sessions focused on building interprofessional group work with the intention of keeping the groups together for the following two interprofessional modules in years 2 and 3. The learner group was diverse in terms of cultural, academic and e-learning skill background. Most were new to the university and our e-learning systems. Limited time was available for induction into IT systems and students were not able to access formal lab teaching in the use of PebblePad or our VLE because of time constraints.

How things are currently done

This was a newly validated module in two newly validated awards. We have experience of using both the VLE and PebblePad for e-assessment on a smaller scale but this is our largest scale use of e-assessment in a single cohort. Across the rest of the academic portfolio there is a mixture of e-assessment and paper submission. A generic aim was
to provide students with a convenient distance learning package and to speed up the return of assignments with timely, contextualised feedback. Students on these awards typically submit assignments during placement periods and so we wanted to avoid travel into the University from placement and reduce our carbon footprint. The newly validated curricula are committed to using mainly e-submission for assessments and so this experience was important as a proof-of-concept for other module teams in managing our large student groups.

Why PebblePad?

- Able to assign tutor groups to accommodate named marker groups (20 teachers) across three sites for groups of learners of 15-22 per group, allowing an interprofessional, geographically dispersed team of teachers to have rapid access to their scripts for marking.
- Able to restrict markers to a tutor view of their students’ scripts by the use of gateway tutor groups, thus simplifying the task for new users of the tools.
- By creating criterion statements using the comment bank facility we provided markers with ‘stock statements’ to speed up feedback and increase consistency in feedback.
- Conducted internal moderation of scripts in the Gateway space and communicated this to markers and external examiners easily and confidentially. Stored evidence for internal and external review.
- Rapid release of grades and feedback to students.
- Replace the ‘module box’ for NMC validation events with an archive of all scripts, reviewer evidence and important module documents.

The purpose

By using PebblePad we aimed to:

- Provide markers with rapid access to scripts despite their tutorial groups being geographically dispersed.
- Enable markers to mark at the location of their choice without piles of scripts to carry.
- Enable students to submit from home or campus according to their circumstances but as most were on placements it made it easier to reduce travel and costs (printing). Assignments could be submitted as late as midnight on the day of submission.
- Achieve criterion referenced marking using new University-wide level descriptors by creating marker groups using the gateway tools.
- Rationalise the management of a very large student and marker population.
- Manage internal and external review more effectively over geographical distances reducing carbon footprint.
- Provide more robust evidence of moderation that was open and transparent.
- Replace physically located and cumbersome module evidence boxes required for external review, with gateway archives of module scripts and associated documents.
The approach

- We used the assessment gateway to set up a file upload task for the students and gave them more than one practice activity to test their ability to carry out the task (rehearsal).
- We used the tutor group tool to provide discrete access to own students’ scripts for the facilitators and this encouraged criterion-referenced marking.
- We used the comment bank to provide markers with grade descriptors to increase the consistency of feedback across the twenty marker groups.
- We were able to provide students with detailed, in context feedback using annotation of scripts which were then uploaded to the file asset type.
- We internally reviewed scripts and recorded this in the tutor blog, forming the basis of the moderators report.
- We specifically appointed an external examiner for all three interprofessional learning modules who was keen to support online marking and moderation.

The result

- Most students successfully submitted into the correct gateway with a file upload but some did not and we have taken steps to reduce submission error with the next cohort (February intake).
- We were able to immediately see a normal distribution of grades across the cohort but also within marker groups.
- All markers returned scripts on time electronically but not all markers uploaded annotated scripts. There were still some differences in quality of feedback but most markers gave criterion based feedback.
- At the end of the marking and internal review process all markers had access to all scripts and reviewers comments to facilitate learning about, from and with others which is a key tenet of interprofessional learning.
- We had ready agreement where internal reviewers raised questions about parity of marking and we will discuss reasons for this in our presentation/workshop.

The impact

We feel that we have learnt important lessons on large-scale management of e-assessment and have already implemented changes for our second iteration starting in January 2012. Planning has commenced for year two IPL modules that will use the same model. We have considered our processes to endeavour to fool-proof the submission process but have recommendations for developers based on user behaviours. In particular, the recognition of valid file type rather than just asset submission, and extra feedback to users to reassure less confident users of technology. Evidence for this will be statistically analysed numerical data and extensive user free-text feedback. We will also provide marker feedback on the process, including that of external reviewers.

Some student comments from our data include:

“I would have to make an 84 mile round trip which would possibly cost £15 plus in petrol”.

34
“It definitely saves time, effort and cost to come into Uni to submit a paper copy. When your printer is running out of ink and you haven’t got the time or money to print off your assignment, and you’re on placement, this all adds to the stress. Submitting on PebblePAD is easy and I’ve never encountered any problems. The receipt by email is always reassuring.”

“I much prefer submitting my work electronically and receiving feedback electronically……., if you want to make a last minute change to your work, if you have printed it already, then you have to re-print it so it’s a waste of paper and ink. However with online submission, you can just edit your work on PebblePad and re-send it to the gateway. I like getting my grades back in private as well.”

Markers using PebblePad e-submission have commented:

“Once I got into the swing of things, the on-line marking process using Pebblepad has been a positive change for me. I have probably been more efficient than traditional paper, word processing a feedback sheet.” Marker A [has marked online in the VLE but mainly paper assignments]

“So far I’m finding the process good to follow, and I like the drop down box of feedback.[using Comment Bank]” Marker B [new to e-submission]

“I find the PebblePad mechanism of marking a bit tedious - having used systems elsewhere that allow feedback and comments in one file or downloading of all files makes it much quicker and easier. It certainly adds to the time needed to mark using pebble” Marker C [experienced in online marking]

Lessons learnt

Barriers to implementation

Duplication of work and unnecessary errors for the module leader because of lack of institutional support for integration between gateway grading facility and our student management system (e-vision) grade input system.

What have we learnt

We have demonstrated that we were able to scale-up our use of e-assessment and we have shared practices with module teams that had already used the gateway for smaller student numbers.

We learnt that digital illiteracy remained despite what we feel was careful instruction and that where possible systems should be designed to alert users to submission errors such as failure to upload a file/wrong file type.
We observed that perceptions of staff with regard to submission default is different for electronic submission to paper submission and this stimulated new conversations within award teams about policies and expectations.

In brief – making the case for PebblePad

The system has provided:

- A sophisticated system for module leaders to manage large scale complex tutor-student groups efficiently
- Rapid release of feedback
- Excellent archive of all scripts and relevant documents that would not be feasible to keep as a paper.
- Reduced carbon footprint (travel and print/paper costs)
- Easier production of consistent feedback

To view this case study in an electronic format please visit this link:
www.pebblebash.co.uk/2012/pdf/cs06.pdf
Keeping track of research students - and supervisors!

Mark Gamble
Centre for Learning Excellence, University of Bedfordshire, UK

Chosen theme(s)

Organisation: Managing Organisational Process

The background context

A problem faced by the Higher Education sector is that the engagement of postgraduate researchers is difficult to gauge due to the nature of their postgraduate research programme. The Research Graduate School at the University of Bedfordshire is experiencing a sizable growth in research student numbers and required a way in which to monitor engagement, safeguard and aid the student and supervisory experience, and keep a centralised archive of records from 9 research institutes of mandatory monthly supervisory meetings. Therefore we used, in the main, PebblePad to resolve these issues.

Our process:

- The researcher writes up salient issues after the monthly supervisory meeting. This is done using a template form on PebblePad.
- The completed form is sent to the Research Graduate School Gateway by the researcher. This action generates an automated email notice for the supervisor. It also generates an automated record update in our student record system (SITS).
- The supervisor uses the validation option in PebblePad to verify that the record is/is not an accurate reflection of the meeting. Supervisors can also leave commentary about the record at this point. Researchers receive an automated email notifying them of validation.
- The Research Graduate School archive completed and validated records and copy them to a supervisor repository.
- SITS flags up to the Research Graduate School those students who are not engaging. This non-engagement can then be investigated.

We needed to effectively capture and record engagement of research students and supervisors with the research process and ensure that this was happening on a regular basis, both for the purposes of ensuring that students receive good, regular supervision, and for the purposes of reporting to the Border Agency to ensure that we could prove overseas research students were actively engaged with their commitment to UK study.
Why PebblePad?

PebblePad Forms and Gateways were the ideal solution for keeping a consistent record of supervisory meetings (structured around discussion, iteration and action-planning), agreeing the record, and storing it. Additional coding was developed with PebblePad that automatically pushes a record of that meeting to SITS. This additional data field is then queried monthly to provide a simple report of engagement, flagging students who have no record of supervision.

The purpose

We aimed to develop a way of providing an automated, formalised and consistent reporting of research student supervision which would also meet the requirements of external bodies, e.g. the UK Border Agency, in evidencing researcher engagement with the University.

The approach

The process allows a postgraduate researcher to place their record of a supervisory meeting in a virtual space where the supervisor can confirm if the record is an accurate reflection of the meeting or not. The process works in such a way that the content created by the postgraduate cannot be edited by the supervisor. Likewise any comments left by a supervisor cannot be altered or deleted by the postgraduate. The supervisor can view records by all of their students but not the records from any postgraduate from other supervisory teams. All postgraduates can see only their own record and not the records of any other postgraduate.

The Research Graduate School also felt that it was important to have a section on the meeting form that showed training and/or PDP participated in by the researcher. This section is mandatory!

The Research Graduate School at the University of Bedfordshire archives all records on a regular basis once they have been approved by the supervisors. Supervisors have access to past records of their supervisory meetings with students. The student record system SITS is automatically informed of the occurrence of a supervisory meeting record being uploaded and this constitutes a principal metric for demonstrating engagement, or otherwise, of students.

This process was initially tested by members from the postgraduate researcher, postgraduate supervisor and Research Graduate School communities.

All incoming postgraduate research students are given training in this process as part of their mandatory induction. Researchers are also introduced to their online footprint and how PebblePad can aid them in improving/focussing their online footprint.

Stakeholders included: Postgraduate research students, research supervisors, the Research Graduate School, University senior management, the UK Border Agency, the

The result

- A systematic on-line process (using PebblePad) for documenting supervisory meetings in a consistent manner across 9 research institutes. Initial ownership is with the research student and oversight with the supervisor. Also, there is provision of an archive of records for students, supervisors and the Research Graduate School.
- An automated and consistent means of recording supervisory meetings as a principal tool for monitoring research student engagement, through establishing an encrypted link between the University’s online documentation of supervisory meetings (using PebblePad) and the student record system (SITS).

The impact

This system impacts on all supervisors and their research students across the University.

Lessons learnt

This project addressed a very important issue which was considered highly significant by the main stakeholder, the Research Graduate School. However, once the system was in place, maintaining the momentum has proved to be a challenge as some resistance by some staff has been seen.

The process relies on training both supervisors and their students on a system which looks very different from what most users have ever seen before and many supervisors expressed resistance to being asked to do what they perceived as a menial task with another challenging system. Clearly there is an issue here around how the management of research students is factored into the culture of a Research Graduate School.

The recording of the action plan, the requirement to refer back to this, and its use in planning the next stage of work as part of the monthly meeting cycle is an enormously valuable aspect of the process. This helps to keep the research student focused and on-track and, in this way, could be said to be contributing significantly to an increase in the quality and quantity of the University’s research output.

The possibility of tying the process into the generation of online research portfolios was mooted but has not yet been pursued as a policy. Having a culture of using PebblePad in this way would be likely to better regularise the use of the supervisory meeting record. Student buy-in was not a problem, nor was buy-in from new staff.

A lesson learnt would be to run an introductory workshop with supervisors, allowing them to unpick some of the hazards and issues which can impact negatively on their responsibilities and which this recording process can address. They can then produce their own set of issues, which can be resolved by the introduction of this process. It is also reasonable to note that the new version of PebblePad, Pebble+, is likely to be
more acceptable to research supervisors in terms of style and accessibility. A strong commitment to this approach from senior staff with a policy requirement for all supervisors is very important.

A particular issue revolved around logins to the system, since at the University of Bedfordshire postgraduate research students have two accounts, staff and student. There was some confusion regarding which account should be used for this particular purpose, since both automatically give access to PebblePad.

**In brief – making the case for PebblePad**

- Only PebblePad provides the necessary requirements – form, feedback, validation, e-mail alert, and archiving – in one integrated system.
- PebblePad provides the additional benefit of an archive of assets relating to the research process leading to creation of a research portfolio/diary which will support the viva process.

To view this case study in an electronic format please visit this link: www.pebblebash.co.uk/2012/pdf/cs07.pdf
Facilitating e-assessment (the grading of clinical practice) through the use of shared webfolios

Deena Graham
College of Nursing, Midwifery and Healthcare, University of West London, UK

Chosen theme(s)

Teaching/Professional Practice: Managing e-Assessment

The background context

This case study has built on previous work undertaken with the Blended Learning Unit within the College of Nursing, Midwifery and Healthcare of using PebblePad to provide formative feedback to students on work based learning experiences. The context and philosophy of this original work was to support student nurses on nursing programmes while they were out in clinical practice and to facilitate their ability to reflect on, and learn from, clinical practice. Other reported studies have demonstrated very similar findings to the outcomes of this small scale project at the University of West London (UWL) (Holmes, 2010; Haigh & Currant, 2010).

The Next Stage: The Post Graduate Diploma (Pre-Registration) Nursing

In 2010 the Pre-registration Nursing programme team developed a MSc programme for pre-registration nursing. The students can exit this programme with a Post Graduate Diploma that meets the regulatory body requirements for registration as a nurse at the end of year two. This programme has a number of proficiencies and essential skills that must be met and this is a requirement of the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC), the regulatory body, and many of these are achieved in clinical practice. The NMC stipulate that there must be assessment of performance in practice but there is no requirement to grade practice.

Inherent in the philosophy of the curriculum development team was the belief that collaborative working with practice partners is the cornerstone of high quality nursing education, in that practice education prepares practitioners that are fit for professional registration and academic award (UWL, 2010). For this reason, during the curriculum development phase there were discussions and critical debate with practice partners around the concept of using an eportfolio to assess and grade clinical practice. A literature review was also undertaken to help with the decision making process. The curriculum development team decided:

- There was a value to grading students’ level of application of theoretical knowledge to the development of proficiency in practice, as this gave formal recognition to the practice component of the curriculum (QAA, 2007). The grading of application of theoretical knowledge allows the student to demonstrate clinical reasoning...
skills and goes beyond ‘showing and doing’ (Wilson & Scammell, 2010).

- Grading practice would be important for students in that it provides feedback and a clear indication to the student as to how they are progressing in practice. Good feedback is valued by students because the more students practice and get feedback the deeper they understand what they are learning and the more adept they become at managing complexity which is vital in healthcare programmes (Gibbs, 2010).
- The themes of assessment developed throughout the programme would be linked to the NMC proficiencies:
  a. Professional and ethical practice
  b. Care delivery
  c. Care management
  d. Personal and professional practice
- To use a tripartite system of grading to address issues related to validity and reliability of grading clinical practice as described in the literature (Wilson & Scammell, 2010).
- That based on previous experience PebblePad would be the most suitable tool for assessment and grading of practice through the use of webfolios.

**Why PebblePad?**

Through developing and planning innovation into our curriculum design the programme team have been able to involve the mentors in the workplace in the collaborative process of assessing and grading student nurses in clinical practice. The grade awarded is the summative mark for an academic credit bearing module.

**The purpose**

**Tripartite Assessment** – involving students, mentors, and personal tutors in the marking and grading of clinical practice via the use of webfolios.

The tripartite system of grading clinical practice involves the student, the mentor and the personal tutor in the assessment and grading of the students’ summative clinical practice assessment document via PebblePad. The purpose of using a tripartite system of grading was to address issues related to validity and reliability of grading clinical practice as described in the literature (Wilson & Scammell, 2010).

The proposal was that

- The students have a practice assessment document which outlines the competencies to be achieved. The mentor works with the student to facilitate the development of an action plan to assess the student’s level of competence practice.
- The student develops an action plan and produces a series of assets in a webfolio that demonstrates how they are embedding evidence based practice in the agreed assessment areas (professional and ethical practice, care delivery, and care management). The students also have to reflect on how they have developed
personally and professionally within that placement area.

- Throughout the placement the student can share their evidence in the webfolio with other students, mentors and personal tutors for comment and formative feedback on the work produced so far.
- At the midpoint and final interviews there is collaboration between the mentor and the personal tutor in judging the quality and standard of the evidence provided by the student to demonstrate their understanding of the evidence base used to underpin clinical practice, and a final summative grade is awarded.

This collaboration in the overall marking of the practice assessment document between the student, mentor and personal tutor is known as the tripartite system.

**The approach**

Action research was used by the programme team to undertake a small scale study to share lessons learnt from the development, implementation, and evaluation of the assessment and grading of practice. This method was chosen as it allowed the team to analyse in a systematic way the impact of implementing a change to the assessment process in the multivariate context of clinical practice (Kim, 2009).

The aims of the study were to:

- Involve all key stakeholders (Clinical Placement Partners, e-learning development support from the university, the mentors, and student representatives) to produce a strategy to put the above framework into action.
- Prepare resources for staff development and training:
  a. Personal tutors
  b. Mentors
  c. Students
- Embed an evaluation strategy that allowed the team to reflect and compare early assumptions, identify early any potential problems and/or opportunities, and identify new and unexpected themes that may be emerging

**The result**

**Findings so far (emerging themes)**

- It is possible to grade clinical practice through the use of webfolios and the tripartite system.
- NHS firewalls are very problematic – but not insurmountable.
- Preparation of mentors in practice is key.
- The support from the e-learning development team is critical.
- It is important to have a strategy for scaling up support to practice (as cohort sizes increase).
The impact

Emerging themes (unexpected) – Adding benefits to the teaching, learning, and assessment experience for the student

- It appears that grading clinical practice promotes student engagement in the assessment process in clinical practice.
- Creating their own webfolios inspires students to produce varied and creative work.
- Students seek out and receive regular and appropriate feedback.
- There is evidence of meaningful learning in the webfolios.
- The students demonstrate a high level of reflective thinking.
- Students are engaged in the process and evaluate it well.
- Mentors are supportive of the process (seen as personal learning and development).
- The process is seen as innovative (as evidenced in reports from NMC reviews and UWL Periodic Reviews).

Lessons learnt

Strengths

- Grading students via the tripartite system is not difficult.
- There is better communication between the mentor assessing practice and the personal tutor.
- The overall strength that was not expected is the apparent value added benefits in the learning and assessment process for the students.

Opportunities

- With on-going evaluation and support there is the opportunity to develop this format of assessment and grading further in other healthcare programmes.
- There are other opportunities for PebblePad to be used for e-assessment in healthcare programmes.

Challenges

- The preparation of mentors has been very time consuming in the developmental stage.
- The main challenge that was not foreseen was the issue related to firewalls in NHS Trusts.

What would we do differently?

- Set up gateways for submission of work from the very beginning. We did not do this in the initial stage and the management of assets was challenging.
- Undertake pilot work with the trusts in relation to submitting work through the Firewalls.
In brief – making the case for PebblePad

- PebblePad is a flexible tool that can be used for e-assessment.
- It offers a feasible way of grading students on work based learning experiences.
- It has improved and strengthened the method of communication between personal tutors and mentors.
- Collaboration with the e-learning team in the university is vital in developing smooth processes for e-assessment.

References:


Acknowledgement

Thank you to Andy Turner (Technology Enhanced Learning Manager UWL) and Bob Guinn (Technology Enhanced Learning Developer/Consultant UWL) without whose help and never ending support this project would not have survived.

To view this case study in an electronic format please visit this link:
www.pebblebash.co.uk/2012/pdf/cs08.pdf
Drivers and barriers to using eportfolios as a newly qualified teacher

Elisabeth Barratt Hacking, Susan Martin, Geraldine Jones, and Peter Webber
Department of Education, University of Bath, UK

Chosen theme(s)

Teaching/Professional practice: Continuing Professional Development

The background context

This study considers some of the drivers and barriers to taking eportfolio practices developed by trainee teachers during a University based Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) programme into a professional environment as they begin work as Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) in schools. The study is based in the Department of Education at the University of Bath and PGCE partner secondary schools.

The purpose

There is little empirical research regarding how individuals experience moving their eportfolio activities from one context/role to another. This case study seeks to illuminate this issue by investigating whether and how eportfolios can support trainee teachers’ transition to NQTs.

The approach

The research employed a participatory methodology involving trainee teachers, NQTs, university tutors, school based mentors and professional tutors, and the researchers in discussing the potential for eportfolios in the induction year alongside discussing foci for the research. The study spanned nine months from the end of the PGCE year through to midway into the NQT year and followed six trainees who had volunteered to take their eportfolio practices into their first teaching post.

There were several data collection points over this period.

- Focus groups following a participatory workshop with key stakeholders (May 2010)
- Focus group with trainee participants (June 2010)
- Individual interviews with trainee participants (October 2010)
- Individual interviews with trainee participants (January 2011)

All trainee teachers who had been using eportfolios during their training were invited to continue working with the research team in their NQT year. Six trainees indicated that they wished to be involved in the study. They had used a mix of eportfolio platforms including
blogs and personal websites, however PebblePad was the ‘default’ platform offered. All trainees had made good use of their eportfolios in their PGCE year and at the end of their training all trainees were positive about their experience of using an eportfolio to both reflect on and present their evidence about their professional development against the Standards. They were also enthusiastic in respect of continuing in a similar vein in their NQT year to meet the corresponding Induction requirements. They predicted that the benefits of the eportfolio in the PGCE year could be translated into the NQT year, although they foresaw the need for support in respect of fit with the new Standards and pro formas. In response to this we set up templates for the participants using PebblePad, similar to those they had used during their PGCE. Thus, all the NQTs started their posts with an interest in using their eportfolio further.

The result /findings

An initial participatory workshop was attended by seven professional tutors/mentors (representing 6 local schools), 4 trainees, 3 University tutors, 1 early career teacher and 4 members of the research team. Trainees gave presentations on how they used their eportfolios to support their development. Focus groups were held to gather participants’, i.e. users’, views on how eportfolios could be used to support trainees in their transition to becoming NQTs and their continued professional development (CPD). Some specific perspectives on the potential benefits of using eportfolios with NQTs which were identified were:

- they enable strengths and weaknesses to be seen at a glance;
- they provide continuity with the trainee year;
- they raise expectations that NQTs will engage with practice and reflection.

There were also observations about the potential challenges to NQTs taking their eportfolio practices into school settings including:

- lack of buy-in from the school;
- efficiency (or not) of school mentors managing different approaches to CPD;
- staff support in using the eportfolios as part of the mentoring process.

NQTs’ experience of eportfolios at the start of their professional career

All trainees were contacted and most visited early in their NQT year (September/ October) with a further follow-up visit to take place in December/January that included meeting each NQTs’ Induction Manager and subject mentor. It was not possible to carry out follow-up face-to-face interviews for each NQT due to time constraints on the part of the sample. Where appropriate, telephone interviews and email correspondence replaced face-to-face interviews.

Two NQTs never started to use their eportfolio, citing lack of time, lack of support and no requirement to use them as the reasons for this.

“When I reached the end of my PGCE year I was quite adamant to use my eportfolio not only through my NQT year but also throughout my teaching
career. However ... I have been unable to continue with my eportfolio”
(NQT)

Four NQTs were interested in using the eportfolio and discussed its use, its advantages and disadvantages. There was some but not much understanding of the eportfolio process by their Induction Managers and, in one case, by the mentor.

Not surprisingly, the demands of being an NQT have a significant impact on time for any tasks not directly concerned with teaching or pastoral responsibilities.

“I set up a blog online before the start of term but I have not used it since. I don’t use it because I don’t have time and also I don’t have a requirement to do so.” (NQT)

However, while ill-health (self, mentor, head of department) are unexpected occurrences and therefore difficult to anticipate, there would seem to be no reason for an NQT not to know what the school’s expectations were of them in terms of requirements for Induction.

Only two of the NQTs continued to actively use their eportfolios. Both these active eportfolio users had some support in their workplace. One had full support from their mentor and induction manager. The other had no support from the mentor but there was praise for the eportfolio from the Induction Manager. In both cases, however, the NQTs were working on their own; there was reflection and the eportfolio was being used to record good practice and teaching and learning issues.

“I tend to be a ‘Blitz’ type of person and I blitz the eportfolio work about every 3 weeks. It helps me to reflect. I am of the generation using computers.” (NQT)

However there was no sharing or feedback for the NQTs which they found disappointing. Both said how different this was from the active use of the eportfolio in their year as a trainee.

“My portfolio is significantly different compared to my PGCE in that during my PGCE year I constantly referred to it, reflecting on it and was striving to keep it up to date. Currently I am not able to invest as much time into it and it is not playing a significant role in my development, whereas during my PGCE it helped me develop” (NQT)

One of the significant influences on this was the fact that there was no similar requirement from the school to complete a portfolio of evidence.

The impact - implications and conclusions

One element of trainee engagement and support for using eportfolios during the PGCE was the requirement to engage with and produce a portfolio as evidence of progression against the Standards. The PGCE tutors encouraged and supported trainees in the process by, for example, reading their eportfolios and commenting on them. In one
Local Authority the NQT, mentor and Induction Manager were all interested and keen on the use of eportfolios. The Induction Manager and mentor were also interested in extending such to use for Performance Management. Clearly support from the school was an enabling factor for the continuation of NQTs’ eportfolio activity. Additional factors were strong personal ownership of the eportfolio and intrinsic motivation to make it work.

There was a significant observable change in that using an eportfolio was an identifiable supportive factor in trainees’ development but as an NQT, for most, completing it became, at best, curtailed. What was realistic to accomplish as a trainee rapidly became unrealistic as an NQT, particularly where interest and support from relevant agencies was lacking or absent. The eportfolios developed for the PGCE year could be characterised in Cambridge’s terms as ‘standardised’ portfolios where the purpose and structure to a large extent are set by the institution in order to support assessment against the Standards. However the six trainee participants in this study had developed strong ownership over their PGCE portfolios and as such used them reflectively and effectively. This arguably enabled them to see potential beyond the PGCE year. In the PGCE context the eportfolio purpose and to some extent ownership may be thought of as shared between the trainees and the University based tutors.

There are requirements in the form of Induction Standards for which NQTs have to successfully demonstrate evidence. Schools and LAs support and take responsibility for this process, in conjunction with staff in schools who have designated responsibility for the induction of NQTs. Variations at both school and LA level were apparent in the sample. Inevitable variations existed in terms of the form that NQTs were expected to use to demonstrate satisfying these Standards. One LA, for example, requiring a paper version, with other LAs not stipulating a particular mode.

Strong personal ownership, a potential driver for the use of eportfolios for lifelong learning, was evident at the start of the NQT year and while two NQTs were using their eportfolio mid-way through their NQT year this was not a sufficient driver for continued use by all six NQTs. Other factors got in the way such as lack of internal (school) support or external priorities or agencies (LA).

**Lessons learnt**

In September (beginning of the NQT year) all participant trainees could still see the advantages to using eportfolios. Quickly this enthusiasm was eroded as the demands of being an NQT were realised and dominated NQTs’ time and thinking. Time, or lack of it, was a key constraining factor. Both the NQTs who continued with their eportfolios had scaled back their activity compared to their PGCE eportfolio work. Those who were unable to continue put forward reasons including being snowed under and not having the time, being off sick, not having access to a mentor as they were too busy, off sick or not interested, and being expected to work with a system that was paper-based.

For schools generally it seems (e)portfolios are not a priority. Whatever the reasonableness that might be accorded as a result of some of the pressures and demands made on schools, this is disappointing and contrasts vividly with other professions where eportfolios are much more integrated into working practice. For example, the NHS
requires Foundation Doctors to complete an eportfolio. This is an integral part of their training and they are supported in this process, for example, by practice managers. If schools were to adopt a ‘standardised’ approach to eportfolios for CPD this could go some way to supporting NQTs more effectively in the eportfolio activity. However only where new initiatives complement or resonate with extant priorities are they likely to be supported. Nevertheless, on a positive note, there is the possibility of tapping into the potential of using eportfolios as evidence of meeting Standards and for contributing to NQTs’ professional development at individual, school and LA level.

While it has been argued that highly ‘personalised’ eportfolios with strong personal ownership make them more robust to use across work/life contexts, it can also make their assimilation into institutional objectives more challenging. This research indicates that support and reciprocal engagement in eportfolio activity between individual teachers and their workplace mentors is a key factor in sustaining the use of eportfolios for teacher professional development.

**In brief – making the case for PebblePad**

An eportfolio system is an enabler for a standardised approach across a profession i.e. it is **necessary**, but – it is not **sufficient**

- in overcoming local priorities in respect to CPD
- in driving large scale change.


To view this case study in an electronic format please visit this link:
www.pebblebash.co.uk/2012/pdf/cs09.pdf
Using PebblePad to support school wide collaborative learning

Jackie Haigh
School of Health Studies, University of Bradford, UK

Chosen theme(s)

*Learning*: Reflection, Graduate Attributes  
*Teaching/Professional practice*: Programme/Course Development  
*Organisation*: Managing Organisational Processes

The background context

The context for this case study is a School of Health Studies where 5 professional departments (Nursing, Midwifery, Radiography, Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy) were revalidating their undergraduate programmes at the same time. Each revalidated programme was to include a 20 credit cross-school module, where students would have the opportunity to work in multidisciplinary teams. There was previous experience of this in an inter-professional education module but the assessment of this module had proved problematic. The assessment was a Multiple Choice Questionnaire (MCQ) of students’ knowledge of the National Health Service (NHS) and other health professional groups. Marks did not reflect the overall profile of the student and the assessment did not test engagement with learning.

Why PebblePad?

PebblePad provided a platform for bringing together the different aspects of the module into a coherent whole relating to the individual student. This meant that sustained engagement with learning activities was being assessed, not just the ability to write an essay.

The gateway structure facilitates the provision of formative assessment on student work in progress. I created a formative feedback form for the 17 tutors to use to provide high quality and equitable feedback to students. Formative assessment of the portfolios suggests that a substantial proportion of the student body are not engaging in learning activities in a timely manner, but are relying on final cramming to meet a deadline. Formative assessment results have the potential to profile the whole first year and identify those who would benefit from extra time management/ study skills support.

PebblePad has provided a platform to enable the smooth management of a module of 360 students in 17 tutor groups. The facility to put students into tutor groups made the process of accessing and marking student portfolios quick and easy for novice portfolio markers.
The purpose

The driver for this module was the framework for action on interprofessional education and collaborative practice:

- ‘Interprofessional education occurs when students from two or more professions learn about, from and with each other to enable effective collaboration and improve health outcomes.
- Interprofessional education is a necessary step in preparing a “collaborative practice-ready” health workforce that is better prepared to respond to local health needs.’ WHO (2010, p7)

This first year module was to start the process of developing the skills to be “collaborative practice-ready”. Learning outcomes in knowledge and understanding were:

- Outline the roles of different health and social care professions and how they work together;
- Evaluate the factors that can enhance and inhibit effective team working;
- Evaluate the principles of and barriers to effective communication.

In subject specific skills they were:

- Self-evaluate the attributes required of a collaborative, practice ready, health care practitioner;
- Apply communication and team-working skills in interpersonal relations with professional colleagues, service providers, service users and their carers;
- Reflect on application of communication theory in practice settings with clients/carers and professionals.

In personal transferable skills they were:

- Apply reflective techniques to the development of your own learning;
- Communicate effectively, in verbal and written forms, making sure that the meaning is always clear;
- Demonstrate personal learning skills in an eportfolio including use of IT, academic writing, referencing

The approach

The module descriptor was created over a one-year period by a team of stakeholders including academics, clinicians and service users. The aim of this module was to develop self-aware, collaborative healthcare students who are able to communicate effectively in team situations, valuing the contribution of others, and responding appropriately to diversity. This was to be achieved through face-to-face group work and web based portfolio activities and to be assessed by portfolio. I was appointed as module leader and worked from May to September 2010 with a working group to:
• Produce a scheme of work for the module (schedule of lectures and seminars, allocated time, etc.).
• Produce aims, learning outcomes and indicative content for each taught/facilitated session.
• Identify relevant exercises and tasks to include in taught and directed work.
• Produce a guide (Student & Lecturer) to directed work.
• Produce an assessment strategy.
• Produce assessment guidance (Student and Lecturer).

This module is a core module for all pre-registration undergraduate programmes in the School of Health Studies. In 2011 348 students in total from nursing, midwifery, radiography, physiotherapy, occupational therapy and health care assistant undergraduate programmes undertook two days of module activities facilitated in 17 groups of approximately 20 students per tutor.

From the beginning I have seen this module as developmental. Developmental for the staff involved in learning to work together as a team, learning how PebblePad works, and learning how to assess eportfolios. For the student this module was even more challenging. They had to work in a mixed professional team and learn how to use eportfolio tools to reflect on their activities and communicate with their group. I anticipated that this learning would cause anxiety because many students begin university with a very transmissive notion of what learning is, i.e. it is what the teacher tells them to learn, not active engagement in activities which change the person of the learner. I tried to alleviate this anxiety through careful planning and clear instructions as well as an open forum for module questions, but changing a philosophical stance is not so easy.

The result

I am now at mid point through the module. Reflecting on what has been achieved so far I think I have achieved some success but there is considerable room for improvement next year. In this paper I want to focus on the issue of formative marking which PebblePad makes manageable but which raises issues for the module leader.

We have just completed the formative marking process (31st January) and final submission is 14th May. From a staff management point of view a feedback form linked to the gateway worked well. Tutors were impressed with the ease of the process, which allowed high quality, individual yet standardised feedback to be given in a sustainable time frame. However from a student engagement perspective the findings have been disappointing.

Students were introduced to the system during induction week and encouraged to experiment with it until the activity week in week 6 of the programme. In week 6 all students attended two days of group activities, which included an eportfolio workshop. In the workshop they were shown how to download the module eportfolio template and publish it to the module gateway, and how to perform the limited portfolio tasks they would need to create their module assessment. A further workshop was arranged in December 2011 for those students still having difficulty mastering basic eportfolio skills such as linking assets in a portfolio page. Students were asked to include specific items
in their portfolios by the end of December so that they could get substantial feedback from their tutors in January.

Despite these quite explicit instructions a provisional analysis of the formative grades shows that two thirds of the cohort had not done enough to be considered on track to pass the module.

**The impact**

**Learning**

The formative feedback report has highlighted the extent of non-engagement in module activity. Many students leave course work until the last minute, and lack of compliance with the formative deadline might be due to other priorities, given the summative submission date is not until May. However, this formative feedback may also be alerting us to unmet learner needs in relation to time management, reflection, use of literature, IT skills and ability to follow instructions.

**Teaching**

This module was logistically challenging, bringing together students from different courses. These groups had to work face-to-face in group activities, and then maintain learning through group discussion and directed learning tasks, recorded in an eportfolio. Logistically PebblePad was an effective tool for managing this process. This module was an easy way for tutors to sample using this active learning approach with minimum personal risk, since the overall responsibility for success rests with me, the module leader. If eportfolio practice is to widen out from a base of pioneer users it will need to be embedded in curricula and to be led by experts who have the confidence to take risks. This confidence must come from support within the wider organisation.

**Organisation**

From an organisational perspective my results so far look alarming because they demonstrate high levels of lack of engagement. However these are formative results that provide information about the student group. Acting upon this information, through personal tutor follow up to find the cause of non-engagement should improve the overall pass rate and identify those students who require additional support from student services.

**Lessons learnt**

- The main barrier in successfully running this module was that I was the only PebblePad expert. My staff team of 17 tutors ranged from some experience to no experience of using PebblePad with student groups. Team meetings were busy just planning the activities and, though I did spend some time introducing staff to portfolio activities, with the next group of staff I will link this more closely to the portfolio activities expected of students. In this way tutors will be better prepared to provide student support and so develop their own understanding
of the system. Gradually through this module staff expertise will build up – this is a learning activity for tutors; a much more effective learning experience than context free IT training.

• This was the first occurrence of the module. As such I had no exemplars to show to the students. Next time I will make full use of student volunteers to demonstrate a complete portfolio. This will help students achieve a clearer conception of what is expected.
• I will keep detailed records of formative results to compare with final outcomes. I will expect to see some improvement in formative results next year as a result of improvements in module delivery, but I will also monitor formative results against first year student profiles to test my theory that evidence of non-compliance at this formative stage is an indication of overall performance in year one.

In brief – making the case for PebblePad

• ePortfolio assessment is an appropriate means of assessing engagement in learning. This is particularly important to assess in the transition to Higher Education. PebblePad makes eportfolio assessment logistically easy.
• PebblePad facilitates the management of large cohorts of students in small tutor groups and is therefore particularly useful for learning across programmes of study e.g. interprofessional learning.
• The gateway system facilitates timely individualised formative assessment of student work in progress. This can be used to identify failing students and address their learning needs.

References:


To view this case study in an electronic format please visit this link:
www.pebblebash.co.uk/2012/pdf/cs10.pdf
From small acorns do big trees grow: Developing distance learning from 5 units to 20 credit modules and beyond!

Paul Hampton\textsuperscript{1}, Glynis Hampton\textsuperscript{1}, and Emma Purnell\textsuperscript{2}
\textsuperscript{1}School of Technology and \textsuperscript{2}Institute for Learning Enhancement, University of Wolverhampton, UK

Chosen theme(s)

Teaching/Professional Practice: Programme/Course Development, Managing e-Assessment

The background context

This case study outlines the development of a 20 credit module in the School of Technology called ‘Practical Portfolio’ that has run previously at a distance as 4 x 5 credit units over 40 weeks. Both versions are delivered and supported using only PebblePad. It is aimed at practitioners within the construction and built environment industry who, due to the challenges of time and workplace restrictions, cannot attend traditional modes of Higher Education (HE). This particular module has been tailored towards practitioners wishing to become members of the Institute for Clerk of Works (ICWCI). The 4 x 5 credit unit approach was designed to provide learners returning to HE with a steady passage back.

The original framework of 5 credit units was developed through a funded project at the university called ePPSME (Developing an eportfolio Based Pedagogy for Small to Medium Enterprises). The tutors involved in this case study were part of the first pilot project in ePPSME delivering a 5 credit unit in ‘Developing Communication Skills for the Construction Industry’. The tutors used this same model to create 4 x 5 credit units specifically focused on learners wanting to build their knowledge to put them in a stronger position for application and membership into the ICWCI. However, the timeframe (40 weeks) was too lengthy for the learners who were keen to get their ICWCI memberships applied for as soon as possible. 25\% of the cohort didn’t complete further than unit 2, although 50\% did successfully complete all 4 of the 5 credit units. One solution to try to increase the completion rate was to contextualize the 4 units into a single 20 credit module (still at level 4) and look to bring the timeframe into line with the face-to-face modules delivered over 12 weeks, but to deliver it online.

Why PebblePad?

PebblePad has enabled us to provide a distance learning environment for work-based learners where all course materials and activities are accessed via one hyperlink. Content can be delivered through an eportfolio that provides links through and behind the content directly to learner portfolios, which contain reflective activities, skills analysis, planning, quizzes, space for critical incident sharing and group blog discussion (known as activity
workbooks for the rest of the case study). This could not be done in any of our other systems. Had we not used PebblePad, we would have had to use a combination of systems and we wanted learners to only have to get to grips with one technology.

The purpose

After some successful experiences with the 5 credit unit versions completed over 40 weeks it was decided to try to develop this model to support a shorter time frame of study. The aim was to closely work with a professional body (ICWCI) to develop the 20 credit module into a coherent and engaging online delivery format in which the cognitive interaction between learners provides a meaningful pedagogical experience, whilst ensuring that the curriculum best represents their members' requirements in preparation for joining the ICWCI.

The approach

Collaboration with the Professional Body

The new 12 week proposal was presented to the ICWCI Professional Standards Committee in June 2011, and in theory the concept was accepted. The concerns from the ICWCI were that 40 weeks to 12 weeks would lose content and therefore relevance. To address their concerns, the team structured a curriculum design framework highlighting the four key themes outlined in the previous units: Quality; Ethics; Contract Law; and Work Based Learning, the final theme providing the learner with the opportunity to showcase their skills developed during early weeks. This draft outline was made available to representatives in the ICWCI for their comments from the beginning of the design process.

We wanted to ensure collaboration with the professional body wherever possible and explained how the new module design would reduce a “stuffed curriculum”, but would still provide challenging activities and not compromise the quantity or quality of the materials or activities. This did, of course, raise the question of how much involvement employers/professional bodies should contribute towards curriculum design. However, with the bespoke nature of this module, and the professional standards body of the ICWCI requiring involvement so that they would be comfortable accrediting the module, the dialogue continued and members of the ICWCI assisted in providing their own case studies for inclusion to the material. One of the key factors for discussion was the concern that “mentoring interaction”, which is a key requirement of membership to the ICWCI, would be lost through online learning. The ICWCI committee thought that group discussion and question and answer sessions traditionally shared in the classroom would be lost. The solution was to ensure that group blogging activities were incorporated throughout the curriculum, and that the learner interacts with fellow learners from the outset through the “ice-breaker group blog activity” in week 1 and ongoing throughout the module. Another concern was the level of access to a tutor, but again an amicable solution was found and online access to tutors was ensured to be available at least three times a week. Ensuring the platform is formatted in such a way as to allow help and guidance to be easily accessed provided additional reassurance.
The assessment is very much an ongoing process and the module incorporates two summative submissions: an online presentation (20% of the marks); and a critical analysis portfolio (80% of the marks). However, the team have also incorporated weekly activities, which act as a reflective ‘check point’ of constructive alignment and provide patches that can be used in their final critical analysis portfolio.

How the module requirements and collaborative outcomes from discussions with the professional body described above were designed using PebblePad.

The module was broken down into 5 sections: Welcome Week (week 1); Quality (weeks 2-4); Professional Ethics (weeks 5-7); Contracts (weeks 8-10); and Assessment (weeks 11-12). Each of these sections of content was designed into individual webfolios. This was so that the parent webfolio could have each of these sub-webfolios inserted at the week in which they became relevant, thus enabling us to time release the content. The content webfolios contained a range of multimedia resources relevant to that week’s topic. In the 5 credit version of the modules, the webfolios were copied by the learner. However, this proved problematic if something in the content changed such as new policy or legislation, or if a YouTube link broke. The learners were then left with the old version or broken link. For the 20 credit version we shared the webfolios, enabling the content to remain editable where and when needed. In addition, it helped tremendously in the early days to see who had accessed the materials and when.

There were 2-3 short weekly activities incorporated into each week’s content. At the point in the content in which an activity was placed and relevant, there was a hyperlink to a gateway where student activity workbooks were accessible. The activity workbooks were eportfolios that were created for the students at the start of the module, and that the students copied and published to the gateway (as part of induction). It was to this gateway that the hyperlink in the materials pointed. The workbook was a multiple page eportfolio that had each of the tasks pre-populated into it. For example, there were blog pages where students may ‘post new’ to respond to the activity by text, with the opportunity to upload additional files or multimedia. Others may be blog pages that have been made into activities that involve ‘filling in the gaps’ where the ‘edit entry’ option is used. In addition, form pages were embedded for structured activities to be completed and PebblePad quizzes were used for multiple choice type assessment. The workbook contained built in help and guidance with each different activity type.

There were a number of group activities throughout the weeks which were completed in a group blog available from the first week. A separate ice breaker blog was used at the start of the module to try to bring together virtually a geographically disparate group of learners.

A tutor quick links webfolio page was created so that the tutor could see at a glance which activities were in which week, and there was a link to where the activities were located, e.g., a link to the activity workbook gateway if it was a workbook activity or directly into the group blog if a group discussion was scheduled that week.
The result

At the time of writing we are in week 4 of the 12 week version and we have 100% retention of learners that started with us on the programme. The results of the programme when studied in the 4 x 5 credit unit framework was that we lost 25% of the cohort by the second of the 4 units and in total 50% completed overall. So the results for the 20 credit version so far seem positive.

The impact

Programme/Course Development

A similar adaptation of the 5 credit framework using eportfolios into a 20 credit online modular structure that is seen in this case study has also been used in a Distance Law course where all modules have been designed and developed in a similar way that is currently running.

Managing e-Assessment

This case study illustrates a method by which a module can be assessed both formatively and summatively without having to use an additional e-assessment system. Even though this module has not finished yet, the multiple 5 credit version of the module was successfully assessed without using an additional system.

Lessons learnt

We time released the content by theme which worked well. Content was released every 4 weeks and each new section was added to the main portfolio, so that the learners only ever accessed the same shared webfolio which grew over time. In line with this, we released multiple activity workbooks so that an activity workbook was released at the same time as the related content. However, next time we would have only one activity workbook copied and published at the start. This would avoid learners having multiple workbooks at the end.

In brief – making the case for PebblePad

- **Programme/Course Development**
  PebblePad can provide a Distance Learning platform and Personal Learning Space simultaneously. This means there is only one technology platform for learners at a distance and in the workplace to have to learn. PebblePad is an effective content delivery and e-assessment system all in one place that has the added advantage that students have the ability to step outside of the structured use of the system and use the other tools in the PebblePad suite, such as action planning and skills auditing etc., to assist and support them in the completion of the formal learning requirements of the module.

- **Managing e-Assessment**
  PebblePad enables the early identification of students at risk. Through using an eportfolio to complete short, weekly tasks the tutor is able to quickly identify
students at risk if they are not completing the weekly milestones. In addition, the gateway structure and built in functionality give a robust e-assessment platform where the summative (as well as formative) element of the assessment can be carried out with all the necessary quality assurance features.

To view this case study in an electronic format please visit this link:
www.pebblebash.co.uk/2012/pdf/cs11.pdf
Using the ePortfolio PebblePad as an electronic laboratory notebook

Dale Hancock¹, Jill Johnston¹, Sashi Kant¹, Vanessa Gysbers¹, Tim Newsome¹, Ruth Weeks² and Gareth Denyer¹
¹School of Molecular Bioscience and ²Sydney eLearning
The University of Sydney, Australia

Chosen theme(s)

Learning: Reflection, Graduate Attributes, Employability
Teaching/Professional practice: Continuing Professional Development

The background context

Hard-bound paper notebooks are the gold standard for the recording of experimental data and laboratory observations. In all university practical classes throughout the world, students are trained in the practice of notebook keeping through varying degrees of instruction, regular feedback and formal assessment.

However, the modern laboratory collects electronic data – e.g., digital images and movies, spreadsheets, spectra, DNA sequences, gene expression data-sets, etc. – none of which lend themselves to archiving in a paper notebook. Such ‘raw’ student data usually gets stored on in-class computers and is easily lost or, at best, becomes disconnected from the students’ notes and reflections.

Paper lab-books are easily lost or damaged and, in post-graduate research, ownership, security and sharing information within a paper notebook creates problems.

Electronic lab notebooks are therefore increasingly prevalent in modern research labs, especially in the Industry Sector where establishment of intellectual property and audit trails are paramount. As well as allowing inclusion of any type of electronic file, eNotebooks provide security, back-up, and full searchability. In addition, eNotebooks facilitate the sharing and integration of related research resources like recipes, literature, templates, OH&S protocols, etc., within the whole institute. Lab-leaders can keep track of their team’s work, even when overseas, and can view both the raw and processed data.

Why PebblePad?

- PebblePad is a fraction of the price of commercial electronic lab notebooks.
- It is easy and fun for the students to use, engenders engagement and creativity through integration of rich media, and naturally promotes a reflective approach, especially with use of achievement assets which can be continually updated as progress is made.
• Gateways enable us to administer submission and assessment involving large numbers of practical sessions, students and tutors. It is hoped that these will also lead to increased accuracy, efficiency and accountability of tutors in providing marks to students and course coordinators.

The purpose

We wanted to better prepare our students for the future research workplace environment. However, commercial eNotebook systems are VERY expensive ($1-2K per person per year) so various alternative options had to be explored. Crucially we wanted the student experience to be more than just file management and cataloging, placing more emphasis on feedback and reflection and engendering a culture of engagement, creativity and fun.

The approach

After briefly experimenting with Content Management Systems, open source eportfolio, and social networking software, we came to realise that PebblePad would do both the student side (creation, linking, submission) and academic side (assessment, feedback) parts of the job.

In mid-2011 we began by recruiting student volunteers to create webfolios that mimicked write-ups from existing practical class experiments. Initially we were tied to the traditional structure of Aim, Methods, Results, and Conclusions – but soon the power of PebblePad to foster creativity and reflection came out. Students started to use photos and natural expressions to record what they did and observed at the bench, they linked their results to the original data-files (eg, XL spreadsheets and computer outputs) and they used rich media to record their improving technical skills. We started to see the potential for incorporating pre- and even post-session questions to make the students better prepared for classes and to foster increased communication between tutors and students. Just as importantly, the students have produced product of a quality that will endure as foundations for professional accreditation and evidence of attainment.

The result

We are currently fully deploying PebblePad as an electronic lab notebook in four separate units of study in the general area of molecular biology and biochemistry. If the experiment is a success, every Unit will use the system. Each has an enrolment of 150-250 students and we are conducting one formal research study to directly evaluate the outcomes across a wide range of criteria.

Even without that data, we have all appreciated the opportunity to reflect on what we are actually getting students to do in our practical classes. We have all had an opportunity to discuss (and sometimes justify!) the way we approach things with our colleagues, something which, shockingly, did not always occur before. Already, we are convinced that PebblePad will assist several aspects of class delivery and student engagement. But we also see an opportunity for augmenting the training and reflection processes of our tutor team.
In the past, it has been difficult for tutors to mark paper-based lab books in real time as, to do so, the journals have to be collected in. Since this creates a situation in which students no longer have access to their work, it is usual for notebooks to not be collected until the end of a unit, which then means that there is no ongoing feedback. With PebblePad, tutors can easily access the eNotebooks between classes, providing formative feedback when it is most needed.

The impact

Even before full deployment in Semester 1 2012, the best evidence that the eNotebooks are already a success is the ease of translation to a real research environment. Modern research in molecular biology and biochemistry involves significant collaboration, often between researchers in different locations (sometimes in different countries!). To genuinely collaborate and facilitate quick access to raw data for all project members is sometimes challenging and relies on both the fast transfer of large amounts of electronic information and the organisation and discipline of all the researchers involved, particularly those generating the raw data. PebblePad enables the researcher, often a student, to post their results with reflection for all team members to access quickly and comment before the next experiment is planned.

Already PebblePad is being used to document and enrich genuine postgraduate and undergraduate research projects. Additionally, interest in what we are doing is exceptionally high across the Faculty of Science and beyond. The fact that this is happening in an environment where choice of a high-end commercial eNotebook is bogged down by indecisions, is doubly satisfying.

Lessons learnt

The most important lesson is to respect and embrace the individual personality that specific course coordinators bring to their Units of Study. Each of us has some aspect of our course that we cherish and do not wish to lose in a ‘one size fits all’ solution. Therefore when implementing PebblePad across several units of study, it is important to capture and enhance the unique flavours inherent to the individual units. For example, in one Unit we are emphasising how PebblePad can be used to make students acknowledge and be proactive about reflecting upon and using the feedback they receive. In another, the vision was to integrate the laboratory notes into the webfolios so that the students could customise the background material and so that the context would stay permanently bound to the data and reflections.

Another lesson is to keep the Science at the forefront of the exercise. PebblePad provides such a stimulating environment that it would be easy for students to focus on producing ‘pretty’ product unless properly guided. In this respect PebblePad is no different to PowerPoint which, in the early days, was over-used by students (and some academics!) with respect to animations and colour schemes but which, with education and example, has proven to be an effective communication tool. Indeed, already we see an opportunity for us to educate students into correct figure and legend writing by mimicking the format of on-line journals in the presentation of completed scientific studies.
In brief – making the case for PebblePad

Reflection, Graduate Attributes, Employability and Continuing Professional Development are all addressed by the fact that PebblePad allows students to track their progress with laboratory skill acquisition, and be engaged by producing a quality journal that fosters observation and creativity.

To view this case study in an electronic format please visit this link:
www.pebblebash.co.uk/2012/pdf/cs12.pdf
Using umbrella webfolios to enhance diversity and creativity in the Personal Development Planning process.

David Home and Judie Taylor
Faculty of Education, Health and Sciences, University of Derby, UK

Chosen theme(s)

Teaching/Professional practice: Programme Course Development

The background context

This case study is based in the Faculty of Education, Health and Sciences, in the subject area of Mental Health and Therapeutic Practice.

PebblePad was used to create an umbrella information webfolio with pictures, links, instructions, examples and task areas that was flexible and open to change and individualisation.

The webfolio work was to provide an environment for Creative Expressive Therapy and Complementary Therapy students to collate academic and creative materials in subfolios that were in themselves to be part of a creative/reflective learning and personal development planning process. They were level 5 students, who, in the main, had limited computer experience, as they generally worked with art, dance, drama and music, or hands-on work such as aromatherapy and shiatsu. Therefore, one of the principal issues was aspects of technophobia, and a reluctance to link computer work with creativity of expression.

The purpose

In the previous year PebblePad had been used mainly as a collection point for work done and tasks set for the module. It was felt that by making a more interactive, illustrated webfolio with subfolios, it would give an example of the flexibility, and creative potential of the webfolio. This would in addition enhance their transferable skills, while at the same time linking creativity with technology, and addressing the challenge of technophobia, if given the right support.

The approach

An umbrella webfolio was created that contained an interactive information webfolio where students could find module information and guidance but with interactive features, and two separate task subfolios; one to complete directed learning activities and collate evidence of experience and the other for the student to house creative reflections on the module learning itself, and a resultant Personal Development Plan (PDP). This was a development from the previous year where the module documentation had been
placed simply on Blackboard and the students submitted webfolios for the PDP module assessment. This merged the interface with Blackboard more fully. The methodology for using subfolios was developed for this academic year and is still under review with feedback being used to improve support systems and enhance performance for next year.

The result

PebblePad was used with a cohort of approximately 60 students ranged across the Creative Expressive Therapies’ pathways that included art, music, dance, drama, and complementary therapies. Many of the students displayed varying degrees of technophobia and needed regular support with different aspects of PebblePad work used for the module.

They were asked to create a webfolio to support their PDP, as well as collate personal data, certificates, references and so on, for post-university use. In addition, they were required to reflect on the taught sessions of the module as part of the learning outcomes, and their PDP was to be based around these reflections. What PebblePad allowed was the use of all their diverse individual approaches to illustrate, inform and enhance their work and create webfolios of evidence suitable for presentation to future employers.

There were two principal areas of data to be considered by the students, i.e. personal data and the module work, in addition to information and support material supplied by the university. Therefore, the notion of a multileveled webfolio was developed and used. It was felt that all the data needed to be kept in one place for convenience, but at the same time create the opportunity of having identifiable folios as integral units in their own right.

The construction of an information filled module folder (webfolio) was inserted into a simple holding or ‘umbrella’ webfolio, and then the two student work webfolios were entered in parallel to create a total of three sub-webfolios that could be stored and accessed separately yet be linked to one entry through the cohort gateway.

This structure created the space for the students to target a more personal space that would be a useful data-bank at a later date outside the university environment, and another that targeted the aims and outcomes of the module.

One immediate issue was that when the gateway was launched the students received over 20 assets, as the information package contained various aspects to demonstrate the potential for being creative within PebblePad. However, some quickly saw the potential for ‘playing’ with the webfolios, but at times were frustrated by the structure because links and designs put in the sidebar of sub-folios were lost, and could only be placed in the umbrella webfolio. This meant that any links that they wished to keep in sub-webfolios had to be kept within individual pages, and not down the navigation sidebar. This was quickly learnt but would mean that any sub-webfolio used at a later date as a main webfolio would need to be adjusted or appear to have a relatively empty navigation bar.
The student, therefore, received what appeared to be 4 different webfolios, so there was a problem of multiple submissions to overcome, followed by the need to ensure that assets were linked to the correct subfolio. This problem was not particularly difficult to rectify in a short, end-of-class session, as all that had to be established was that the umbrella webfolio was the one that had to be sent to the gateway.

Overall, most of the students engaged well, and created a wide variety of webfolios, including artwork, music, photographs, video links, cartoon illustrations, redesigned templates, and so on.

On reviewing the feedback, the negative aspect regarding PebblePad revolved around wanting more training and support with technical difficulties, as, for instance, there were password issues and size limitations that blocked certain asset uploads. We are currently reviewing feedback, some suggesting more and improved support for actual contact work with PebblePad, and some more related to module content and delivery.

The impact

21% gained A grades for the module, 30% gained B grades, and a further 30% gained C grades which suggests a very good level of engagement, and a high standard of webfolios. In addition, all referrals were due to incompletion of tasks rather than standards of work.

From Table 1 below it can be seen that the percentage of those gaining the equivalent of a 2:1 or above has improved from 42.6% two years ago to 50.9% in the current academic year, and the number of students receiving the lowest pass grade dropped from 11 to 6; thus, overall the results have shown an upward trend.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>2009-2010</th>
<th>2010-2011</th>
<th>2011-2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sub-total ‘A’s (1st)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-total ‘B’s (2:1)</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-total above C+</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage gaining above C+</td>
<td>42.6%</td>
<td>41.2%</td>
<td>50.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-total ‘C’s</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-total ‘D’s</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FMUs</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Submitted</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Comparison of student results for the past three academic years

From the table above it can be seen that there was little real change when PebblePad was first introduced in 2010, as it took some time to establish for both staff and students alike. However, even though there was a complete shift of paradigm from paper based folios to web based there was no perceivable negative impact on results, and the transition was relatively smooth.
This academic year, based on feedback from the previous cohort, PebblePad was introduced earlier, before the summer, so the students had an opportunity to work with it and explore its potential, and more specific time was set aside during the provision of the module to cover concerns, and this would appear to have helped results improve.

Many students were inspired by the versatility of the platform which allowed them to show their learning experience and skills in a creative, personalised and interactive way.

“I know I have creativity but it’s kind of locked inside and so PebblePad actually almost gave permission for that creativity to come out …. it was a case of this is yours do what you want with it, not what we [university] want from it … [it was only] once I accepted the challenge and I started by personalising my PebblePad and really getting involved with it, did I actually really enjoy the creativity that it allowed.”

It is felt that the possibility to employ a flexible and adaptable online personal study environment helped focus the students’ creatively, and also gave them the possibility to network and help one another. This led to some students taking a supportive role as IT ‘assistants’, and has given them useful additional experience and transferable skills.

“PebblePad’s really helped me because it’s meant that I’ve been able to gather all different kinds of work, put it together and create this eportfolio, and the advantage of that has been that I could send that across the world, and that I know that I’d like to work in America”

Further analysis of individual cases of those who needed to re-present is called for to establish the reasons for this. It may have been a reluctance to use PebblePad, difficulty with it, or external personal challenges that prevented complete presentations. However re-submissions are still in process so final results are unknown.

To help simplify matters it is foreseen that the holding umbrella next year will be the information webfolio, and the illustrations will be standardised to reduce the number of transferred assets. The illustrations may also be formatted to create instructions on how to replace them, giving them a two-fold purpose, as the more students can see they can have fun with it the more they are likely to engage, but they need initial guidance and support.

“In the future I would like to use PebblePad to create a much larger database for myself”

Lessons learnt

PebblePad is now being introduced earlier. More support sessions and specific roles of student IT mentors and PebblePad advisors have been created, and additional support material is being considered in the way of screen-shots, Jing type video instructions, and so on. Using the information webfolio as the umbrella is being considered rather than having it as a parallel subfolio. This will reduce the number of webfolios actually used and simplify the process a little. Additional prompts for individualising pages within webfolios
is also being looked at, and the university is being asked to consider a different interface set up with PebblePad itself to support smoother login facilities. Although the feedback and ‘tree view’ tools are good it will be a great improvement to be able to open more than one window at a time, as in Pebble*

**In brief – making the case for PebblePad**

PebblePad provides:

- A flexible, creative webfolio space for collation of, and reflection upon, a wide range of learning, work and evidence.
- Webfolios that are relatively easy to create and can be fun to personalise.
- An opportunity to create an ‘instruction’ area that can be a ‘hub’ of interactive information, examples, and links to other areas of the university’s systems such as Blackboard.
- Feedback and ‘tree view’ tools that make formative and final marking relatively quick (even in their current state).

To view this case study in an electronic format please visit this link: www.pebblebash.co.uk/2012/pdf/cs13.pdf
Encouraging student careers reflection, planning and engagement through online portfolio (webfolio) building.

Andy Howard  
Careers and Employability Centre, University of Sussex, UK

Chosen theme(s)

*Learning*: Reflection, Graduate Attributes, Employability

The background context

This initiative has been developed within the University of Sussex, a research focused university with academically able students studying across the Humanities and Sciences on undergraduate and postgraduate taught courses of study. The lead group within the university has been the Careers and Employability Centre who have developed the initiative over a four year period.

The initiative has looked to develop strategies to support and encourage student reflection and portfolio building in an effort to support careers choice and effective transition to destinations beyond university.

Why PebblePad?

- Enables students to create reflective portfolios/webfolios which they can review with careers staff and choose to use with recruiters in a secure manner.
- Promotes careers related aspects of self-reflection and analysis in a social networking environment.

The purpose

Purpose for students

- Using webfolios to identify, market, and translate skills and abilities to recruiters beyond university.
- Using webfolios to record, reflect upon, and thus identify, skills gaps and opportunities.
- Encouraging the take-up of new activities for ongoing portfolio development.

Purpose for the university

- Promote Personal Development Planning (PDP) and a life-wide approach to student employability.
- Encourage and enable processes for students to record and gain recognition for the breadth of their activities at university.
• Provide a consistent, reliable tool for PDP and webfolios
• Constructively add to students’ employability, engaging with fast moving developments in social networking.

Our Model and Underpinning Theory

Within the Sussex Plus Initiative we have looked to build upon a range of historic and contemporary theory from reflective learning and careers guidance and employability. This has evolved into a core model at the heart of Sussex Plus where we have aimed to provide a framework to enable students to map the key nodes of influence in their personal portfolios of skills and experience.

The portfolio/webfolio can be seen as a vehicle to undertake reflective learning, where we encourage the student to either:

1. Translate their experiences in relation to the expectations of the potential recruiter, where there is a clear careers goal.

OR

2. Use their portfolio of experience as an aid to identifying potential destinations, where there is an unclear careers goal.

A range of theoretical roots underpin this model, including the “Trait and Factor” concepts of Parsons (1909), focusing on individuals identifying:
1. A clear understanding of yourself, your aptitudes, abilities, interests, ambitions, resources, and limitations;
2. A thorough knowledge of the requirements and conditions of success, advantages and disadvantages, compensation, opportunities, and prospects in different lines of work; and
3. True reasoning on the relations of these two groups of acts.

(Parsons, 1909, p.5)

In viewing this process as a construct we have endeavoured to provide a strong scaffolding element to the concept of developing an understanding of self. By writing about themselves and presenting themselves to others, whether it be careers advisers, academics, friends or potential recruiters etc, students develop their personal narrative. This development of personal narrative provides the opportunity for the student to ‘construct their identity’ (Bujold, 2004), which is fundamental in the process of careers exploration and actualization.

The key nodes of influence we have identified in Personal, Academic and Work provide a framework for the student to reflect upon their personal portfolio of experiences and thus provide a scaffold for producing a reflective webfolio. This to some extent reflects processes in the work of Redmond (2010), which set about producing a possible formula for Employability.

\[ E = Q + WE + S \times C \]

E = Employability
Q = Qualifications
WE = Work Experience
S = Strategies
C = Contacts

We have in a similar way set about producing a formulaic model for the construction of webfolio based narratives in relation to careers expectations and destinations.

Within our concept of nodes of influence we also consider ideas from the application of chaos theory in careers guidance (Bright & Pryor, 2005) in terms of considering attractors. Here we provide a focus point for students considering attractors in relation to Personal, Academic and Work related experiences and encourage students to look for overall learning and meaning in translating their portfolios into offers.

We particularly wish to engender an environment and process through which we can encourage students to develop meaning through reflection considering the work of Moon (1999, p 23):
We reflect in order to:

- Consider the process of our own learning – a process of metacognition
- Critically review something - our own behaviour, that of others or the product of behaviour (e.g. an essay, book, painting etc.)
- Build theory from observations: we draw theory from generalisations - sometimes in practical situations, sometimes in thoughts or a mixture of the two
- Engage in personal or self development
- Make decisions or resolve uncertainty …
- Empower or emancipate ourselves as individuals (and then it is close to self-development) or to empower/emancipate ourselves within the context of our social groups.

Essential to this process is also the concept of ‘critical thinking’ and epistemology through ‘metracritique’ identified by Barnett (1997).

Process Facilitation and Monitoring

The key processes through Sussex Plus and PebblePad are:

- Engaging with students through a variety of marketing, online promotion and 1:1 as well as group activities. Through these activities we highlight the concepts of reflective portfolio building, using our model as a scaffolding framework, see below:

```
  Academic
     /
     /
  Webfolio       
     /
     /
  Personal  Work

  Offer
         --
  Recruiter Expectation
```

- Encouraging students to then create their own reflective webfolios.
- Subsequently to share their webfolios with Careers and Employability Centre staff for feedback. This feedback and monitoring takes the form of short written comments, focusing on the content and design of the students’ webfolios, as well as their suitability for careers purposes. Comments are returned to the student via PebblePad.
- Additional monitoring of the overall usage of Sussex Plus/PebblePad at a strategic management level is undertaken centrally on a monthly statistical basis.
- These activities are focused on encouraging students to use their webfolios as a tool both for their personal reflection, but also for pitching processes with potential employers or other interested parties.
The approach

Key Stake holders

- University Students
- The University Careers and Employability Centre

Other Players

- Student Union
- Academics
- Employers

Methodologies

There was no standing methodology at the start of the project and our strategy has been to review developments in education and industry, looking at good practice in reflective learning, PDP and CPD, as well as employability and increasingly social media and networking. We have then developed a strategy and methodology suitable for our institution. This has required an ongoing iterative process where the initiative continues to evolve.

Timeline

- **Late 2007** - Project started with exploration of alternate methodologies for constructing a PDP system within the university.
- **Early 2008 - Early 2009** - A review of possible methodologies and technologies was undertaken as there was no standing methodology in the university. A number of paper based and electronic options were reviewed.
- **Mid 2008** - At an early stage the original agenda was mixed with a second line agenda looking at encouraging student extra-curricular and work experience potentially through accreditation in response to Burgess and HEAR.
- **Early 2009** - Focused on clear business requirements for the purchase of an off the shelf system. A key element of the methodology was identified as a need to use electronic submission of students’ portfolios and a number of systems were looked at with PebblePad being shown to be the most mature and effective system at the time.
- **Mid 2009** - PebblePad was chosen as the preferred system to be used as the central hub for the Sussex Plus Initiative
- **Late 2009** - Bedding in of the Pebble Pad/Sussex Plus System working towards initial pilots.
- **Early 2010** - A manager for the project was recruited. Development of the process and support materials as well as marketing for the initiative was undertaken including website links and publicity branding.
- **Mid 2010** - Initial pilots of the Sussex Plus system.
- **Mid 2010 – Mid 2011** - Ongoing pilot and refinements of the Sussex Plus initiative and supporting systems and publicity.
- **Academic year 2011-12** - Mainstream use of the Sussex Plus initiative
Current and Ongoing Development projects

We are working on:

- The use of webfolios alongside Linkedin and other Social Media.
- Developing pitching exercises where students complete webfolios and then pitch them face-to-face to employers, who provide feedback.
- Developing webfolio feedback for students from university alumni.

The result

We have rolled out the Sussex Plus initiative across the university and are seeing increasing numbers of students engaging with the resource. To date, over the period from roll out in Mid 2010 to Jan 2012, over 2500 students have registered and used the Sussex Plus/PebblePad system. We currently have over 800 active users in the system.

In addition to these active users who are making a proactive choice to engage with our resource, we have presented our materials across the university in an active marketing campaign. We thus feel that some of the key messages concerning proactive portfolio building and self reflection are likely to have touched a far greater number of students, though it is not possible to provide clear numbers for this.

The impact

We have developed a system that allows students to reflect upon their broad activities whilst at university and construct functional electronic webfolios.

Possibly the greatest impact the initiative has had is in providing a focus point, methodology and language for the Careers and Employability Centre and the university more generally to promote and talk about the need for students to construct broad portfolios of evidence as part of their time at university and for their transition to next steps. This is becoming increasingly important as a result of the growing use of a social media presence for careers networking purposes.

Our evidence for this can be seen in:

- The uptake of student registrations and outcomes from the initiative.
- Our ability to actively respond to the ongoing escalation in requirements within graduate applications and competency based recruitment.

Lessons learnt

What did we learn?

- IT solutions are a powerful tool, but not a total solution.
- You need to refine and evolve your systems - you need to do it quickly and keep doing it.
- Marketing and promotion of the system needs to be on-going.
• Considerable adaptations to the methodology, to suit specific departments such as Product Design, Media and Business Studies, have increased student participation.
• “Pitching Your Webfolio” student presentations to employers have proved successful learning opportunities for undergraduate and taught masters students.

What would we do differently / What others can learn?

• Look for as clear a definition of the desired outcomes as possible, and as early as possible.
• Undertake effective student research and testing.
• Engage wider staff at an earlier point to develop better buy in from the start.

What barriers did we face?

Early difficulties were encountered in areas such as:

• Student and staff buy in.
• Technology usability issues and providing suitable support for students through individual, group, print, and online media formats.
• Strategic choices such as choosing to focus or not on asset functions; or a more tailored and tightly defined approach to the webfolio tool.
• Marketing strategies, between wholesale student wide marketing v special projects and specific groups or something more mixed.

Each of these issues can be and have been progressively addressed.

In brief – making the case for PebblePad

• PebblePad has provided us with an off the shelf backbone to allow us to develop a methodology and wider system that is aimed at helping develop students’ employability.
• PebblePad has sought to develop and update their systems to evolve the usability for students and institutions.
References:


To view this case study in an electronic format please visit this link: www.pebblebash.co.uk/2012/pdf/cs14.pdf
“It forces me to reflect and reconsider what I thought I knew... and I was enjoying it!” Reframing CPD as dialogic blogging.

Julie Hughes and Gavin Rhoades
School for Education Futures, University of Wolverhampton, UK

Chosen theme(s)

Learning: Reflection
Teaching/Professional practice: Programme/Course Development, Continuing Professional Development, Managing e-Assessment

Setting the scene

This is a multi-voiced text in which we (Julie, the tutor and Gavin, the colleague/learner) will explore our PebblePad experiences.

The background context

This is a Masters in Education; all students are education professionals/para-professionals with an educational context/practice to draw upon. There are limited opportunities for blended learning at this level currently within the school, although this is a priority for future work and activity. There had been no earlier use of blogging as a collaborative reflective tool.

So I (Julie) decided that I would make the formative (assessment for learning) task a compulsory blog post (2 per week) which I hoped would engage learners, critically, with selected ‘texts’. The ‘texts’ were deliberately multi-media in nature and the task was deliberately open to interpretation. I had hoped that this echoed Barnett’s (2010) call to be courageous as he states “the will to live in creative spaces and their associated temporal rhythms require positive courage; the courage to live in the future and take on tasks that have to be uncertain as to their outcomes” (p.81).

Why PebblePad?

I (Julie) have been very happily using PebblePad since 2004 with students. But I had never taught a Masters module with lots of colleagues (peers) as students before.

This was a new Masters level module in a new MA programme – Learning in the Digital Age. As an institution we are thinking about how and where we might adapt our current curriculum to move to a more flexible, blended/distance learning ‘offer’ and I was asked to consider this in my curriculum design and delivery choices. Under the newly validated routes we were allocated 18 hours face-to-face contact time. I wanted to test out how I could further blend (and test) the use of PebblePad to encourage Masters level engagement with set ‘texts’ and engagement with the wider group.
Week 1 of 9 found me teaching in Palestine so I had to think through how I would use PebblePad at a distance. I have used PebblePad for pre-induction activities but this was week 1 of teaching – a first. This was a quite crucial development for me as a teacher as there would be no physical me in week 1 of teaching and I would have to scaffold and model what would be expected on the module. So I shared my teaching webfolio (with embedded blog page) and I utilised the scaffolding within the PebblePad blog format to allocate conversation groups with prompts and questions. Guided by the wise words of Ron Barnett (2007) I hoped to facilitate a learning experience where “(s)students (read teachers also) must come into a felt relationship with uncertainty in a space which supports a will to learn” (Barnett, 2007, p1). In this space “the main pedagogic task is simple to state and near impossible to achieve. It is that of releasing students that they come into themselves, in relation to their curricula challenges. They become beings-for-themselves...They have their own will to learn” (Barnett 2007, p.1).

The purpose

Rationale – testing what I (Julie) thought I knew.

I am very influenced by Keri Facer's (2011, p.1) vision that, “education is a site in which visions of the future proliferate.” Facer continues:

"When technologies are released, they are adopted and appropriated within existing social values, structures and expectations: they are shaped and reshaped by beta testers, early adopters and marketers..... a useful way of considering how technologies ‘shape’ the world is to consider it as a process of ‘co-production’ between the potential capabilities of the technologies and the ways in which they are perceived and taken up. (p7)

So in working with colleagues at this level I was interested in how ‘re'-appropriation might manifest itself. And Gavin’s wonderful ‘re'-appropriation of the blogging space was a revelation.

The approach

I (Julie) hoped that I offered structured blog prompts and interesting, provocative texts. As I have said above, this was a new venture, a risky venture – and I do think that ‘risk’ is good. The timeline was incredibly tight as I had to get the group to buy-in to this approach by week 3. What I learnt from Gavin’s approach in week 3 set a powerful signifier/model for the module. Gavin’s use of the blog structure was both revelatory and emancipatory. Gavin scaffolded and structured his 1000 word response to engage his peers in dialogue. He said:

“I have found this exercise to be a very interesting one. I think writing it in sections has been useful, because I have found that the more I reflect on what and how I wrote the previous section, it has changed how I have written the next section – I would love to say that I intended to take a dialogic approach when I started but that is unfortunately not true but I found it to be a very useful exercise, to be honest, much more useful than I
anticipated it would be. It has really opened my eyes to the potential of the approaches that you have shared and converted me to them in an almost 'Damascene' manner!"

Gavin went on to say

“As I was doing the exercise and it was getting longer and longer, I did wonder about the potential impact it might have on the others with a bit less experience/confidence but I figured you would probably moderate expectations at the next face to face if I misjudged what was required - and I was enjoying it! I think I also felt peer pressure to do a good job, if you know what I mean?”

There are many examples of Computer Supported Collaborative Learning (CSCL) approaches to promoting learning via discussion (see Dillenbourg & Hong 2008). The main aim of these tools is to solicit opinions from participants, and then present them with an opposing view expressed by one of their peers in order to promote effective argument through engagement with divergent opinions.

In this case the typical type of CSCL tool (e.g. Sensemaker) was inappropriate. The learners were from a range of backgrounds and a range of experiences and for some using a blog was a very new, challenging experience. The blog part of the discussions also took place asynchronously over a 9 week period, whereas the more structured CSCL experiences might happen over a period of a few hours in one location. This meant that the tool used needed to be accessible on a range of different devices. The reflective nature of the course demanded that students have time to think about the stimulus material, but also about the comments from their peers and how they might respond, and this again meant that the blog was a good tool to use.

The discussions took place on two social planes, the first within the whole group, and the second as an individual engaging with the blog. This was ideal for the part time nature of the course and enabled students to participate at a time of their choosing. Learners could also take time to reflect on the posts that others made, whereas in a classroom an immediate response would be required.

As this was a new group of learners and the aim was to be supportive and collaborative, a careful path had to be followed in terms of the amount of challenge that was offered – too much and participants would become disaffected and disengaged, too little and the learning would be less than optimal. The private posting feature of PebblePad allowed me (Julie) to offer messages of support/guidance to individuals without the rest of the group being aware that this was happening, which was useful for increasing the students’ levels of confidence, and therefore participation.
The result

The blogging activities not only allowed reflection and discussion on the issues at hand, but through their use I (Gavin) had to consider the nature of how I was learning, and how best to present material so that the others in the group might engage with it successfully. The incremental nature of the approach taken meant that a dialogic process evolved almost incidentally (from my point of view as the learner).

I believe that the approach Julie took of getting learners to review specific articles, and reply to these reviews could be seen as a type of ‘macro-script’ to guide online dialogic learning (see Wergerif et al 2008) that works appropriately with these Masters level part-time participants to enable shared creation of understanding, which exceeds what could be accomplished by an individual working on their own (Stahl, 2004).

The impact

I (Gavin) have subsequently spent a lot of time reflecting on the value of this type of learning activity and have since changed my own teaching programme (PGCE IT for the Secondary School sector) to incorporate exactly this type of structured, focussed dialogic blogging activity with my trainee teachers. I am also encouraging them to use it in secondary schools with their pupils as part of their final written assignments.

Lessons learnt

- I (Julie) have learnt that (critically reflective) blogging works with a Masters level group from the beginning whether I am there (face-to-face) or not.
- I have learnt again about how much I can learn from my learners/colleagues in this case.
- I have learnt that weekly focussed ‘bloginars’ managed by Masters level students are a powerful learning activity.
- I have recognised that this works because it is blended and not distance learning.
- As someone (Gavin) who has for the last eight years worked with Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs), but almost exclusively with computer assessed and individual student task type approaches, I cannot understate the impact that this social learning process has had on my own professional practice and values.

In brief – making the case for PebblePad

So you will have guessed by now that Barnett is a very important influence. He says, “teachers and the taught teach each other. Their roles are interwoven, such that their boundaries become indistinct to some extent” (Barnett 2007, p.132) and “the will to live in creative spaces and their associated temporal rhythms require positive courage; the courage to live in the future and take on tasks that have to be uncertain as to their outcomes” (Barnett 2010, p.81).

PebblePad is the creative, co-constructionist space that allows us to inhabit wonderfully temporal rhythms and delicious uncertainty.
• Supported effective collaboration between participants with very different skills and experiences.
• Supported asynchronous discussions to develop (including from Palestine!), fostering the reflective process in a more critical manner.
• Privacy tool allowed the tutor to prompt and support participants as needed without being seen to ‘take over’ the discussion – this changed the very nature of how the tutor interacted with the participants.

References:


Improving results and student experience through the application of the BLPAS (Blended Learning Phased Assessment Strategy) framework to a cohort of 200 level 5 students.

Ingrid Kanuga
The London School of Hospitality and Tourism, University of West London, UK

Chosen theme(s)

Teaching/Professional practice: Managing e-Assessment

The background context

This is a level 5, 20 credit module, delivered to 200 students within the fields of hospitality, events, aviation and tourism in the London School of Hospitality and Tourism. The module is called “managing people in practice” and at the end of the 14 week taught part of the module the students go on a 1-year work placement.

The students come from a mixed background, reflective of the local demographics in London. Both international and home/EU students study the module. Most learners need to support their studies through part-time work and in some cases full time work. A small percentage is mature with a family to support.

A survey taken by the students in 2010 showed that most students are practical learners and enjoy taking part in active learning activities.

The theory part of this module discusses Human Resource Management in preparation for their placement the following semester. In the past the delivery of this module has been outsourced to another school within the University. We experienced a lower than average submission rate on this part of the module as well a lower median grade. The method of assessment was an essay. It was felt by the module review team that involving PebblePad would allow for a more active learning environment which could be accessed both at the University and at home and which would appeal more to the student described above.

In addition, for the practical part of the module the students complete a work portfolio during their placement, which was previously submitted in hard copy. In 2010, PebblePad was introduced to transfer the assignment to an online submission. However, students who did not have previous assignments using PebblePad found it difficult and demotivating to do so. To avoid reoccurrence, we needed to ensure that in 2011 the theory part would include a PebblePad assignment.
Why PebblePad?

Using PebblePad allowed us to phase the assessment with 10 part-submissions on which we could give formative feedback either in person or online. As this was a large cohort it allowed for quick overviews of who had worked on/submitted part of their assignment by simply looking at updated items on the gateway.

The purpose

The aim of this project was to enhance the learning and experience thereof for the mixed cohort of students, and with that increase the submission rate for the theory part of the module as well as to increase the average grade by applying the method of formative feedback through the phased assessment framework. A secondary objective was to make students more accustomed to using the PebblePad software, which would help them with their online work portfolio for the practical part of the module. Thirdly we were keen to develop the Blended Learning Phased Assessment Strategy (BLPAS) framework, with the vision of applying it to other modules and programmes in the future. PebblePad was found to be the ideal platform for this.

The approach

A project to review the theory part of the module and assessment was initiated in January 2011 with the initial intention to make this a blended learning module where the learners would be able to learn either via classroom teaching or online, depending on their own needs. The re-design of the module was led and implemented by the module leader and was developed and implemented by September 2011.

The stakeholders were the students, the module delivery team, the Field Leader, and the employers for the practical part of the module.

The methodology was based on the BLPAS framework. A phased assessment strategy, where students complete a range of activities or small assignments as part of a larger assignment, like a portfolio, increases student engagement and allows for development of skills (Baker, 2010). The BLPAS framework was initially designed to allow learners to develop their graduate and employability skills through a range of activities forming a phased assessment whilst considering the student profile. The framework took into consideration the rapid development required without risking a cognitive overload, whilst being designed to facilitate reflection, peer and community feedback. Within this framework the student builds up the required skills through completing a range of activities relevant to the employability skills needed in the field, which involve building up theoretical knowledge, experience, action and reflection and on-going feedback from the tutor and peers both online and in person.

The BLPAS framework was successfully piloted on a previous cohort of 50 direct entry, level 6, international students studying a similar module. The students in the pilot study reflected positively on their learning experience and academic results improved notably (Kanuga & Viram, 2011).
To manage the teaching and learning, the webfolio function of PebblePad was used to create a standard template which students could copy and publish from their gateway. We set up gateways per seminar group, which allowed tutors to quickly assess progress per group and to display the gateway in class when needed. Within the webfolio template students had access to 20 pages. Most pages were linked to the weekly theory covered in lectures in an interactive way allowing students to access online video resources and articles on the week’s topic, and answer a set of reflective questions. One page linked to a separate webfolio which was created to help students prepare for work if they wished to do so. This webfolio included activities like CV building, practicing interview techniques, and answering questions on employability skills. We also included a “Help” page with frequently asked questions on using the technology.

The most important page for the project was called “my assignment” and in here students had access to a video, a powerpoint presentation, and a PDF document, all outlining details on the phased assessment and how to upload documents within the webfolio. The different methods of explanation were used to ensure the needs of all different learning styles were met. For the phased assessment, students were required to produce a powerpoint slide per weekly topic. This slide needed to be attractive to a diverse audience and the notes section needed to include theory, evaluation, analysis and justification appropriate to the academic level. Tutors would check the assignment on a weekly basis through the gateway and give formative feedback. The final assignment required the student to upload a video of them presenting the slides as they would do when presenting to a company and to link this video in their webfolio.

Students were being assessed on their phased assignment only but feedback was provided on all elements completed within the webfolio, for example the CV.

The result

We saw a direct result on student submission and improvement of grades.

- On a cohort of 203 students we achieved a submission rate of 98%.
- In 2010 the median grade was 49; in 2011 this was 58.
- In 2010 25 students achieved between 30-39; in 2011 this decreased to 14 students.
- In 2010 28 students achieved between 60-69; in 2011 this increased to 52 students.
- In 2010 17 students achieved between 70-79; in 2011 this increased to 27 students.
- In 2010 4 students achieved between 80-89; in 2011 this increased to 13 students.

In addition all students were asked to submit a 300-600 word individual reflection on their learning during the 14 week module, with reference to the blended learning phased assessment and/or what they had learned of the HR function/preparing for work and career opportunities. The students could comment on either, or a combination of, the theory, the phased assessment method, the formative feedback, or the seminar work.
For this study we selected 109 reflective submissions out of the total cohort of 203 students. The reason for selecting these submissions was that they were unidentifiable by either name or student number when opened in a WORD document.

The students were allowed complete flexibility regarding which part they wanted to reflect on and, for the purpose of this study, we identified 6 key areas for analysis:

1. The student reflected on their theoretical (HRM) learning during the module.
2. The student reflected on the phased assessment method in a positive manner.
3. The student reflected on the phased assessment method in a negative manner.
4. The student reflected on using PebblePad in a positive manner.
5. The student reflected on using PebblePad in a negative manner.
6. The student clearly linked what they had learned overall in the module to applying this knowledge in practice as part of their careers.

Some students commented on a combination of the above points. Multiple mentions on one key area, in one reflective note, were counted as one mention.

90% of the students mentioned key area 1. To be counted as a mention, we only looked at reflections that demonstrated the learning taking place; descriptions or reviews of HR theory were not counted. For example, one student commented:

"Working full time for 5 years, the Human Resources department was a completely unknown world for me. I had never known what its role was. After completing this module it is clear to me that there is a big importance to the HR section in a hotel and that they are a huge part of the strategies that need to be thought of to make a hotel work and to provide the best customer service. I really like HR now".

The high amount of mentions in area 1 is evidence that the method of teaching and assessment worked and that the student learned and enjoyed learning.

A total of 62 students commented on the benefits of the phased assessment.

"Preparing the weekly assignments and receiving feedback helped me improve my academic writing whilst still being able to be creative. The video presentation was daunting but watching myself back I learned from my mistakes. I will use this method in the future and I hope I can submit drafts for all my subjects"

34 students commented on using PebblePad, with one negative comment:

"I did not enjoy PebblePad, I find it difficult to use however I acknowledge that we need to get used to different IT packages as we will get those at work."
Positive comments included:

“I mostly appreciated PebblePad which was fun and taught me a lot about myself”.

“In the beginning I thought it was confusing but now I think it is straightforward and it will look good on my CV”.

“I very much liked using PebblePad and I like that I can update my work and share with future employers”.

Finally, 69% of the students related what they had learned to their work and careers and mentioned how they felt that the module would help them in the future. Many of the students said they really understood all the roles within their companies now and how to get to where they want to get in life.

It could be argued that the evidence taken from the reflective notes is positively biased as the students were submitting it as part of their assignment. However, the flexibility around what they were allowed to comment on reduces this risk. In addition students were allowed to reflect positive as well as negative. In general the notes demonstrated that the student learned from the module and that they enjoyed the learning.

The impact

• As can be seen from the above evidence the students benefited more from the phased assessment method and also reflected positively on their learning experience.
• Marks improved and the submission rate was 98%.
• As a teaching team of six, we believe that from a “managing e-assessment perspective” it would be difficult to administer such an assessment without a tool like PebblePad. PebblePad allowed us to track progress of students and to give formative feedback through a range of channels.
• A similar model or framework could be applied to other modules, and these do not have to be of a similar nature or topic area.

Lessons learnt

• We had underestimated the learning curve in using PebblePad for formative feedback for both the teaching team and the students. The first four weeks of the module required additional teaching for the teaching team and the students on how to use PebblePad.
• The number of phases (in this instance 10) was challenging to manage and in the future we would most likely reduce this.
• As well as a submission tool for an e-assessment, PebblePad was also used to provide online learning modules. This may have caused some confusion amongst the students as to where to upload their assessments. The online learning modules were not utilised by the students and we will need to review the need of this for the future, or how to integrate them into the teaching and learning differently.
• For a large cohort the module resulted in additional administration of the numerous gateways. It is important that all educators involved in the delivery of the module and providing of formative and final feedback understand how to use the gateway and the resources to their advantage.

In brief – making the case for PebblePad

• PebblePad allows for the submission of multiple assessments throughout a module and provides an easy overview of these submissions to the educator.
• The phased assessment method through PebblePad has proven to be a success in terms of the learning experience for the student and the results achieved.
• PebblePad allows the educator to give formative feedback and for other educators to comment on this if needed.

References:


To view this case study in an electronic format please visit this link:
www.pebblebash.co.uk/2012/pdf/cs16.pdf
The use of PebblePad for reflective practice in the Keele MPharm programme.

Katie Maddock and Luke Bracegirdle
School of Pharmacy, Keele University, UK

Chosen theme(s)

**Learning**: Reflection  
**Teaching/Professional practice**: Continuing Professional Development

The background context

PebblePad is used within the School of Pharmacy by undergraduate pharmacy students in all four years of the MPharm programme. PebblePad hosts the templates for a reflective portfolio of personal professional development over the duration of a student’s studies. The portfolio is completed over the course of an academic year with each student having access to a professional mentor. This professional mentor is a member of staff who maintains Continuing Professional Development (CPD) records as part of their professional requirements. The majority of these mentors are registered pharmacists but our list includes a Registered Pharmacy Technician and a medic. In years 1 and 2 of the course, each student has formal, timetabled meetings with their mentor, allowing full discussions around reflective practice. Students are enabled to develop their own reflective “style”. In the final two years of the course, students are encouraged to reflect independently but have access to a mentor for guidance should they wish it.

Why PebblePad?

PebblePad provides a feature to ‘push’ web-based templates out to students for them to complete as our course progresses. Templates can be designed to be structured or without any structure inviting the student to reflect on their own experiences individually and without any explicit direction. The facility for staff and students to share the same space and for it to be academically led (where necessary) helped its adoption into the MPharm programme.

Students were able to assign their reflective work against a set of key course themes or objectives. Consistently recording work against a set of pre-defined targets, whilst also providing the student with features to record work against their own defined goals, retained the principle that a personal portfolio is a student’s individual space.

To compliment this, PebblePad’s close integration with our Learning Management System (LMS) Blackboard 9 and our central student records system (SITS), allowed our students to consider their portfolio as an extension of their existing teaching and learning online space. Students used their Keele username and password to access many online services, and to grant their access to their portfolio directly from the LMS. Additionally,
administrators did not have to manage a separate set of usernames and passwords to implement the service within the School, saving significant time and effort, as well as avoiding confusion for the student on how to access the service.

The purpose

There are two main drivers for the introduction of a reflective portfolio of professional development to the MPharm course.

The first, and arguably the most important, is the role that reflection plays in personal development – both academically and personally. In 2000, the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) produced guidelines on HE Progress Files (which emerged from the Dearing Report in 1997). An integral part of a student’s Progress File is the aspect of Personal Development Planning (PDP). The QAA define PDP as “…a structured and supported process undertaken by an individual to reflect upon their own learning, performance and/or achievement and to plan for their personal, educational and career development.” (QAA, 2000). The Professional Portfolio used by the Keele MPharm aims to deliver this process over the four years of the MPharm degree. It does not, however, form a part of the students’ HE Progress file. Rather it takes the principles of such a file and applies them to the context of the profession of pharmacy.

Moon (2001) defines reflection as:

… a form of mental processing – like a form of thinking – that we use to fulfil a purpose or to achieve some anticipated outcome. It is applied to relatively complicated or unstructured ideas for which there is not an obvious solution and is largely based on the further processing of knowledge and understanding and possibly emotions that we already possess. (p.2)

Within the context of the MPharm degree, students are encouraged to reflect upon situations or incidents that have, in some way, made them think seriously about an issue or change the way they approach certain situations. This process then allows them to use what they have learned about themselves and apply it (potentially) to future, similar situations. Whilst most individuals go through this process at a subconscious level, a reflective portfolio encourages active recording of the thoughts and feelings involved. Within the MPharm Professional Portfolio, the emphasis is on what the student has learned about themself, rather than what facts they may have added to their knowledge base.

The second driver for the production of a Professional Portfolio is that of the requirements of the profession of pharmacy. Once qualified, an MPharm graduate completes one year of pre-registration training. Over the course of this training year, the graduate must compile a portfolio of evidence which is assessed by their tutor (GPhC, 2012a). This portfolio forms part of the formal assessment of the pre-registration trainee prior to registration as a pharmacist. Once registered, a pharmacist is required to record their CPD activities, preferably in an electronic format endorsed by the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC). Pharmacists must make 9 CPD records annually and these can be called in by the GPhC at any time for revalidation purposes (GPhC, 2012b).
The Professional Portfolio used on the Keele MPharm programme is therefore designed to prepare undergraduate pharmacy students adequately for the demands of reflective practice once qualified and registered as a pharmacist.

The approach

The Professional Portfolio is compiled in a step-wise process over the four year period of the MPharm degree. The School of Pharmacy at Keele University is a new school and so the Professional Portfolio was an entirely new development. PebblePad allows the uploading of pre-defined templates for the students to complete online and tutors can record electronic feedback on the work as well as giving face-to-face feedback. The detail of each year of the Portfolio is outlined below.

Level 1

Portfolio comprises: Profile Statement 1, six reflective pieces, Profile Statement 2.

In Profile Statement 1 the student is asked to write a 500 word reflective statement covering the following points:

- Their understanding of the role of a pharmacist.
- Their understanding of the role they anticipate taking on in their career as a pharmacist.
- Their hopes and concerns about the coming year as an MPharm student at Keele.

The first two points allow the students to begin to plan their professional development, while the third allows them to begin to plan their academic development.

The six reflective pieces are structured. The student is asked to describe and reflect upon incidents that have affected them either personally or professionally. These incidents must be recent (i.e. to have happened within the four months prior to the start of the academic year and during the academic year itself). They are then asked to link their reflections to personal development within one (or more) key topics. These key topics have been chosen to reflect the essential attitudes and values in which a first year pharmacy student should show a degree of competency and insight. The key topics are: professionalism, communication, collaboration and teamwork, problem solving, and self-management.

The second Profile Statement allows students to reflect upon their progress during the academic year both academically and personally.

Level 2

Portfolio comprises: Profile Statement 1, six reflective pieces, Profile Statement 2.

Profile Statement 1 is a 500 word reflection upon the student’s personal and professional progress during their previous year’s studies and any experience (work or otherwise) they undertook during the preceding summer vacation.
The six reflective pieces follow the same structure as for the first year, but the key topics are slightly different to reflect a higher level of skills and attributes. The key topics are: professionalism, communication, self-management, negotiation skills, and leadership skills.

The second profile statement mirrors that of Level 1.

**Level 3**

*Portfolio comprises: Profile Statement 1, SWOT analysis, two full CPD cycles (action plans), Profile Statement 2.*

Profile Statements 1 and 2 mirror those of Level 2.

At Level 3, students are asked to complete a personal, reflective SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats). They are advised to consult their peers to gain insight into how others perceive them. Once the SWOT analysis is complete, students must identify a specific skill and a specific area of knowledge to improve during their third year of studies. The reflective action plan that is then developed for each of these two weaknesses is modelled upon Kolb’s (1984) Learning Cycle; this is a proactive learning cycle. The Keele version follows the four steps outlined by Kolb: active experimentation (planning to learn), concrete experience, observations and reflections, and concluding/learning from the experience. As with the previous levels, a standard template is available on PebblePad for the students to complete for both the SWOT analysis and the action plans.

**Level 4 (M level)**

*Portfolio comprises: Profile Statement 1, seven CPD cycles, Profile Statement 2.*

Profile statement 1 mirrors those of Level 2 and 3.

At this point in their academic career, the aim is to prepare students for their forthcoming pre-registration training year and the CPD requirements of the pharmacy profession. For that reason, the templates used at Level 4 are (almost) exact replicas of those used by the GPhC for pharmacists to record their CPD (see Plan and Record (GPhC, 2011, pp15-18)). Students are asked to complete seven reflective cycles based upon activities they have undertaken during the four months prior to the start of, and during their final year of studies.

Profile Statement 2 is a 500 word reflective summary of the students’ development over the course of their degree studies and their thoughts on their forthcoming pre-registration training year.

**Assessment**
The Professional Portfolio is not graded but is assessed on a satisfactory/not satisfactory basis at the end of each year of study.
The result

PebblePad has provided us with a much more flexible platform for the production of eportfolio entries. Our previous system (the “bolt-on” portfolio element of the Blackboard Vista VLE) required students to upload templates prior to completion, a level of complexity many students found difficult to overcome. PebblePad allows us to pre-populate students’ eportfolios with our own webforms which the students can complete on-screen, without the need for students to complete any prior setup work on their own portfolio.

PebblePad also allows submission of work via Turnitin (the antiplagiarism software) by enabling the students to convert their eportfolios into either .doc or .rtf files. When using the Blackboard system, three days’ worth of IT technician time had to be factored in to convert all of the portfolio entries to pdf files for submission through Turnitin. This time has now been regained and the students have been empowered to accept the responsibility for the submission of their completed work.

The ability to set up a shared set of ‘tags’ for students of our School allowed us to push out to students a set of common goals where we wished to monitor their achievements. Previously this had to be specified in an induction session, and students were asked to pre-populate their own ‘tags’ which made the organisation of each student’s portfolio inconsistent and potentially open to interpretation.

The Professional Portfolio has been running for six years now, two of which using PebblePad as the eportfolio system. A full review of the portfolio requirements will be carried out during July and August 2012 to incorporate more reflection upon academic progress as well as professional progress, the aim being to bring in more of the aspects of PDP within HE as outlined by the QAA (QAA, 2000).

The impact

The portfolio has been very successful in developing students’ abilities as reflective practitioners. The professional mentors have found the comment facility to be extremely valuable for reinforcing feedback given in face-to-face meetings. Access to previous years’ work has also proven beneficial for students in the later years of the course as they apply the skills learned in the first and second year to the more complex reflective pieces. Most final year students instinctively include reflections upon their learning in their CPD records despite the fact that the CPD templates do not state a need for reflection. Two major benefits of the use of an electronic portfolio have emerged. Firstly, there is the flexibility for staff members to review work whenever and, to some extent, wherever, required. Secondly, students can share their reflective work with other individuals or organisations external to the Keele School of Pharmacy, which they are encouraged to do when applying for vacation work experience placements.
Lessons learnt

The flexibility of an eportfolio to be able to meet the needs of the end users is vital; PebblePad has provided this. One barrier that has been encountered is the desire for students to evidence their activities. Our forms were initially designed in a hurry as implementation deadlines were very close. At the time we were not aware of the facility to make direct links between templates and uploaded material in students’ asset stores. In our upcoming review of the use of the Professional Portfolio we will be amending and improving our webforms to include this facility.

In brief – making the case for PebblePad

- A very flexible platform allowing a variety of uses.
- Templates can be custom-made to allow structured PDP and CPD to be recorded.
- Students can see their progress over a period of time.
- Close integration with the Learning Management System.

References:


To view this case study in an electronic format please visit this link:
www.pebblebash.co.uk/2012/pdf/cs17.pdf
CSP ePortfolio: Personalising products and processes

Gwyn Owen and Nina Paterson
CSP Practice and Development Function, The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy, UK

Chosen theme(s)

Teaching/Professional practice: Continuing Professional Development

The background context

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is a responsibility of professional practice (CSP, 2011). For the physiotherapy workforce, changes to healthcare regulation and employment practices during 2004-5 mean that CPD is no longer just a private matter, but has become subject to public scrutiny. The regulators’ standards for CPD (Health Professions Council, 2006) expect registered healthcare professionals to keep a log of their learning, and to demonstrate how that learning has improved the quality of services and benefited the service user. The introduction of a competency-based framework (KSF) within the National Health Service (NHS) in 2004 means that career progression depends on being able to develop and demonstrate specific sets of knowledge and skills.

The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP) is the educational, professional and trade union body for 51,000 physiotherapy students, support workers and chartered physiotherapists. It has a quality assurance and enhancement role for physiotherapy practice: it establishes expectations of its members’ practice (CSP, 2011); and promotes the quality of learning and development through its quality assurance and enhancement schemes and processes.

Mindful of the increasing demands on members to show evidence of CPD for regulatory and employment purposes, the CSP adopted the PebblePad eportfolio during 2008. The timing was designed to align with the Health Professions Council (HPC) CPD audit of physiotherapy registrants’ in March/April 2010

All CSP members were given access to a PebblePad account, and were advised to use the system to plan, record, evaluate and store evidence of learning. The CSP eportfolio was introduced as separate but complementary to the CSP’s other CPD resources which included briefing papers (paper & digital), handbooks, iCSP’s virtual networks, and its physical networks/events. The system was demonstrated at CSP events and during work-based seminars. All members received an eportfolio workbook, and could access personalized support by telephone/email from CSP and PebblePad. By August 2010, 34% of members were eportfolio account holders, but only 70% of these accounts were active.

Surveys of CSP members during 2010 illustrated their preference for paper-based portfolios. This was unsurprising given the challenge of accessing appropriate ICT
(hardware and support) in the clinical environment. There was a further disconnect – the regulator’s CPD audit and staff appraisal systems were using alternative systems e.g. eKSF or paper-based reporting. The limited uptake of the eportfolio could therefore be a symptom of limited access to ICT, which remains unchallenged because work-based CPD processes use alternative systems. Even where access to ICT was not an issue, eportfolio uptake was low which suggests that the CSP’s eportfolio tool was not constructively aligned with the demands of members’ practice.

Data from surveys and focus groups conducted during 2010 spoke of members’ need for an eportfolio system that was quick and easy to use, comprehensive, inclusive and incentivised. The data also highlighted members’ need for support (technical and pedagogic).

Why PebblePad?

PebblePad has enabled CSP to:

- work collaboratively with members to create an interactive resource to support the (CPD) needs of 50 000 CSP members;
- review and streamline existing quality assurance and enhancement processes.

The purpose

Work to develop the eportfolio system began in Spring 2010.

The project aimed to:

- address members’ concerns about access to CPD;
- develop a CPD resource that would support a CSP members’ career development by integrating the CSP’s physiotherapy career framework with other material that could support members’ CPD;
- address issues of sustainability and content management of CPD resources;
- explore the eportfolio as a tool for facilitating collaboration with members to develop new resources/processes;
- enhance members’ experience of using the eportfolio.

Effectively, these aims required a shift in members’ construct of the CSP eportfolio – from an online repository for CPD to a personal learning space. The project’s timing was ideal – qualified members would be subject to the regulator’s CPD audit in Spring 2012.

The approach

Work began in April 2011 to design a webfolio of CPD resources (CPD webfolio) that was based on the structure of the CSP’s career framework. A virtual learning group was established to explore the possibilities of the PebblePad platform and to work with the CPD professional advisor to create a single reference point of information, learning resources and tools that members could personalize.
An action learning approach was adopted because we wanted to facilitate a truly collaborative approach that is consistent with our ethos. The process of action learning would ensure that any resources/processes developed would be subject to critical evaluation, and would offer CPD opportunities for all participants (staff & members alike). There was an open invitation to all CSP members to join the online group – the only criteria were an interest in CPD and reliable access to the internet. 35 members volunteered – an exciting, rich mix of people who brought a wide variety of perspectives to the work.

The plan was to publish a new webfolio (a small section of the final resource) to the group gateway every few weeks between May and September 2011 and invite the group to engage and feedback. The timing ran to ensure some overlap – so that feedback from one webfolio could inform the development of the next. The feedback from the group was rich, constructive and invaluable in informing the design and content of the final resource. It offered insights about the alignment of the resources with practice across a variety of contexts, as well as the practical experience of using the resource (e.g. ICT glitches).

The CPD webfolio was made available to members from September 2011, and formally launched at CSP Congress in October 2011.

Since October the CPD webfolio is being maintained and refined to integrate new CPD materials and to respond to members’ feedback about their use of the CPD webfolio and their CPD needs in a rapidly changing context.

PebblePad’s tools, ease of use and its position on the CSP’s website means that we can respond quickly to develop resources and processes that incentivise members’ engagement with the system in ways that are sensitive to their needs. Examples of these resources include CPD Syd’s (a fictitious physiotherapist) countdown to Christmas calendar, and the blog of being called to participate in HPC’s CPD audit. Examples of processes include an eLearning module to support the CSP’s recognition scheme; and use of a gateway/webfolio resource to fulfil its QAE role. These examples are underpinned by an ethos of collaboration and co-construction, and provide opportunities to showcase the eportfolio’s spaces and tools and role-model good pedagogic practice.

The result

The process of using a gateway to work collaboratively with members to develop and refine resources and processes was successful and is being used for other pieces of work within the function.

The CPD webfolio is sitting on a gateway in the eportfolio system. Since its launch in October 2011, 378 members have subscribed. The subscription rate increased rapidly during January and early February as members prepared for the prospect of being called to participate in the HPC’s CPD audit.
By drawing members into the eportfolio gateway space, members have started to engage with pieces of collaborative projects to develop CSP resources (e.g. CSP practice education guidance) that sit on other learning and development gateways.

Members’ engagement with the eportfolio has changed. The queries we receive have moved from ‘what do I use... for?’ to ‘I want to do... Can you explain how?’ This shift in focus from process to purpose reflects a move towards proficiency/expertise in eportfolio use.

The number of accounts has changed: 42% of membership have an account, but the proportion of active accounts remains relatively static at 71%.

Current activity:

- Maintenance of the CPD webfolio to ensure that it retains its currency and alignment with demands of physiotherapy in a rapidly changing context of practice.
- Piloting an eLearning module with a group of members who have applied for CSP recognition of their programmes of learning & development.
- Starting work to embed the CSP quality & enhancement support (resources and processes) so that through their engagement with these activities, members generate evidence that can be used by the individual applicant to fulfil CPD requirements & by the CSP to fulfil QAE requirements.
- Starting work to embed the CPD process into its educational award schemes so that the application process is streamlined and generates evidence that can be used by the individual applicant and the CSP to fulfil governance requirements.

The impact

- Positive learning opportunities offered through the development of resources and processes.
- Increased evidence of members’ engagement with learning/CPD.
- The collaborative, co-constructed approach has enhanced credibility and usability of CSP’s learning and development resources and processes.
- By embedding CPD and learning and development resources/processes into one space, we have raised their profile and the inter-relatedness of both.

Lessons learnt

The action learning process provided opportunities to modify our approach along the journey – which is ongoing.

In brief – making the case for PebblePad

- Options for personalisation & choice.
- Opportunities to promote collaboration – between individuals, across the organisation & the profession.
- Opportunities to integrate resources to maximise their CPD value.
References:


Health Professions Council (2006). *Continuing professional development and your registration.* London: HPC.

To view this case study in an electronic format please visit this link: www.pebblebash.co.uk/2012/pdf/cs18.pdf
PebblePad tools for a 3D approach to transition – industry, VET, HE or Career Pathways

Pauline Porcaro  
Business TAFE School, RMIT University, Australia

Chosen theme(s)

Learning: Reflection, Employability, RPL  
Teaching/Professional practice: Programme/Course Development, Managing e-Assessment  
Organisation: Student Satisfaction, Retention

The background context

In 2012, the RMIT Business TAFE School’s new online Diploma of Logistics, aimed at workplace learners, will be implemented through Open Universities Australia (OUA). One of the first VET Diplomas to be offered nationally through OUA, it is receiving considerable attention. Two other courses being developed by RMIT are using this design as a model. Given the significant geographical spread of potential candidates across our industry sectors particularly in remote regional locations the decision to provide extended access to this excellent program should be warmly embraced …………… By providing a flexible delivery model in an industry where time is a critical issue and through creating a supportive learning environment which is an area where RMIT excels you will ensure that this new program is highly successful.

Transport and Logistics Industry Skills Council (Robert Adams, CEO)

Overview of the Transport and Logistics industry

- over 461,000 workers nationally
- a growth industry
- predominately low level of skilled personnel
- high concentration of workers aged 35 years and older
- median age 43 years
- lost productivity and low completion rates are barriers to training indicated by industry
- the sector requires more skilled and ‘e-literate’ workers with the growth of online supply chains
- 35.5 per cent of industry workers have an education level of year 10 or below
How things have been done in the past

The Diploma of Logistics was offered to industry in 2011 by RMIT to meet the growing need for training. A program was developed for a large player in the Australian market: TNT. This program was designed to be delivered in the workplace and supporting materials were developed, i.e. a text based workbook. The teacher who was delivering the program mailed the workbook to students, emailed and Skyped them regularly, and flew from state to state to offer on site workshops at regular intervals. This was a time consuming, costly, and non-sustainable practice. Online learning therefore was the perfect solution, as long as it had the appropriate support systems in place.

The issues

Cordes (2009) explained that most adult learners will come with some experience in technology; however one of the challenges to delivering through technology is the varying levels of experience. In the case of older learners, many will come with limited experience with technology, limited confidence in their own ability to learn this way, and perhaps in the lower end of the socio-economic scale, access to fewer resources. Given the median age of the logistics industry workforce these are very real issues. The TNT program teacher also identified that many of the industry learners had few computer skills and their workplaces did not always have the facilities to support them.

This intended cohort, many with no formal or post-secondary qualifications, raises a concern for effective transition back into education. Digital literacy, literacy, understanding RPL, and career planning skills are expected to be areas where students will require additional support.

What we were aiming to achieve

- To develop tools and a framework in PebblePad to support industry based learners' transition into and pathways out of our program in order to optimize the probability of successful student outcomes, to mitigate the risk of attrition, and to build a workplace relevant program.

The tools we chose to develop in PebblePad to support this objective include:

- An induction kit
- An RPL kit
- An e-community centre
- A mentor kit
- A learning plan
- Upfront assessment of literacy and numeracy skills
- Assessment of digital literacy
- A professional pathways or articulation plan
- Webfolios for formative assessment and student reflections
- A graded assessment tool
Why PebblePad?

Key reasons for choosing PebblePad:

- A key tool for our technology mediated learning suite.

The design of our online program hinged on a range of e-learning tools selected to provide workplace-based online students with a balanced educational experience by catering to a range of learning styles: Blackboard for activity-based learning; Blackboard Collaborate for regular dialogue; and PebblePad for learners to store both reflections and work-relevant webfolios for future use in their workplaces.

- A range of features that support workplace learners.

The decision to use PebblePad hinged on its ability to offer multiple tools that provide learners with a ‘Personal Learning Space’ (Sutherland, Brotchie, & Chesney, 2011) that can be used both during and after the learning period. The program was designed with the intention of drawing people from the Transport and Logistics (T&L) industry back to study in order to further their employment outcomes and to support an industry which has a recognized need for skills development. PebblePad was chosen to create 3 dimensional support for these workplace learners; a scaffold between their workplace, VET, and post Diploma into HE or better workplace outcomes.

PebblePad’s strong link to the workplace is demonstrated through the tools that learners can use to build a professional identity and ultimately to guide their post study pathway. They can easily update their CV, store examples of templates to be used in the workplace, share projects with their employers/managers/mentors, and join in industry discussions in their e-community.
• A permanent support tool.

PebblePad offered the opportunity to build tools that were open to all students enrolled in a program. Blackboard is being used for individual course information but a more permanent space for all relevant program information was necessary given the nature of OUA where students enter and exit the program at different places.

• A range of features to facilitate building professional templates and forms.

The PebblePad transition toolkit will include a range of templates and forms to provide transition support into and out of the learning program with the intention of minimizing attrition and assisting students in their choice of pathways on exiting the program.

The approach

The initial stage of this project evolved in 2011 when I was required to guide the instructional design. At that time there was a need to select the learning tools and to design the learning and assessment activities. New to the University I attended a number of PD sessions and discovered PebblePad. It seemed to suit the workplace learner group because of its many features that could be transferred to the workplace and was subsequently selected.

The project-based assessments are all housed in webfolios in PebblePad for the 14 courses in this program. Most of the projects have students working on workplace projects and analysing efficiencies in the workplace; the intent of the design meaning they may retain their projects after study for workplace use, to share with management, or to use as a stepping stone towards career development.

While developing the assessments, one of my major concerns was in keeping the learners on track. OUA operates on four study periods per year of 13 weeks each, one rolling in straight after another. Learners do not have time to get behind in their studies and this became a crucial design point. The idea that when each learning outcome was completed it should lead directly to a part of the assessment made sense. I intended this to be prominent in Blackboard where the learning activities are housed, so designed the ‘Assessment Pitstop’ approach highlighted by an image of a Formula One racing flag to alert students to complete the relevant section of the webfolio in PebblePad. This means at the end of the 13 week study period they will have completed their major assessment by working sequentially through their webfolio project.
During the planning stage I was also involved in the articulation agreements for students who completed the Diploma of Logistics and was fortunate to sit in on the many meetings required in order to complete that agreement. Academics voiced concerns of VET (FE) students’ readiness for HE, so it seemed important to develop students’ academic literacies and readiness for university life. Transition and pathways subsequently became a focus in the second stage of program development. On finding a call for pathways projects I placed a submission to government to fund further work on this project. The project was chosen as one of 8 to gain funding from the Australian Government’s ‘Higher Qualifications Pathways Projects’. This broadened the stakeholders in this project to include government.

The plan to support students in their transition into and out of study is hinged on student satisfaction and retention. The ‘3D transition tools’ designed to meet these two ends in PebblePad include:

- A full induction kit into the program – including individual learning plans and goal setting, an RPL kit, and an e-community.
- Tools for upfront assessment of literacy and numeracy (LL&N) skills and digital literacy in order to provide timely support.
- A professional pathways or articulation plan entitled ‘Where to from here’, including Higher Education pathways and career planning assistance with related web links and training in the use of social media to increase employment possibilities.
- A mentor scheme – where students are encouraged to find a workplace mentor to discuss their projects to enhance their learning. The PebblePad induction webfolio houses a Mentor Kit with meeting schedules, objectives, role descriptors, discussion questions, etc. The expectation of the mentor scheme is that students will then also find motivation in the workplace itself.
Mentor Stop

If you have chosen to find a mentor in the workplace to discuss your studies and ideas with, it would be appropriate at this point to make a time to meet up. Discuss what you have learned in this section as well as your proposed idea for the business. The mentor may have some valuable input on your workplace proposal.

Remember your Mentor Guide is housed in your PebblePad and this holds a ‘mentor meeting schedule’; it is a good idea to complete one of these prior to your meeting to keep the discussion focused.

**Fig. 3:** Students are prompted approximately every 4 weeks to use the mentor kit in PebblePad.

The result

The assessment tools have been built in PebblePad Classic and it was anticipated these would be transferred to PebblePad3 in March. However, due to unavoidable delays and internal support issues our management put the transition to PebblePad3 on hold. The tools are expected to be completed prior to the commencement of the first cohort. Trials of the transition and pathways webfolios are scheduled for May and responses to the kit will be documented with a full report due to government by early June. An industry advisory board evaluation of the program and the tools is also scheduled for May.

The webfolios hold a broad range of information and tools that will support students at both ends of their program. The project based webfolios developed for assessment ensure that students’ assessments are closely related to their workplaces and provide learners with the possibility of growing an internal profile in their respective companies while studying.

The impact

The design of the program has been well received across RMIT. I have been invited to speak at a number of internal events promoting the design and the use of PebblePad to other staff.

As part of the Higher Qualifications Pathways Projects I have recently attended a meeting in Adelaide with the other successful project members to explain the design and the tools we are using. In all instances the project has been well received.

The impact on the teaching staff involved in the design of the learning and teaching materials has been very positive. The use of webfolios as a guided assessment tool for distance learners has made the process of assessment design easy with excellent links to the learning materials. The ‘pitstops’ have proved to be an effective design tool and the concept is now being implemented in other programs.
Lessons learnt

Until the final design and its imminent trial is complete, it is difficult to say what the lessons are. We have, however, learnt a considerable amount by simply developing the design and are now replicating it in other programs; the ability to copy webfolios means much of the structural work can be easily transferred across the Institute.

The transition to the new PebblePad while in the design stage has proved to be a hurdle. Obviously the idea of commencing such a multi-faceted project in a new interface may have been premature and the transition to the new PebblePad would be more suited to smaller and more stable projects while we become competent using the new system.

The sheer adaptability of PebblePad as the main tool in such a broadly scoped project has however been illuminating. It paves the way for its use in many programs to meet a variety of objectives.

In brief – making the case for PebblePad

- Excellent features like webfolio which adapt easily to workplace projects.
- An excellent form building tool to build a multi-faceted transition tool.
- Provides a professional space for workplace projects so students can share work.
- A one-stop shop for all student needs.
- Easy to embed into Blackboard.

References:


To view this case study in an electronic format please visit this link: www.pebblebash.co.uk/2012/pdf/cs19.pdf
The impact on the compliance of recording CPD activity following the introduction of an eportfolio within a professional membership organisation.

Karen Reed and Liz Salem
The Union Learning Fund, The Society of Chiropodists and Podiatrists, UK

Chosen theme(s)

Learning: Reflection
Teaching/Professional practice: Continuing Professional Development

The background context

The Society of Chiropodists and Podiatrists (SCP) is a professional body and Trade Union for Chiropodists and Podiatrists who are registered with the Health Professions Council (HPC). Entry to the profession is at degree level; however the organisation does have affiliate membership for Podiatry Assistants and Technicians. The Health Professions Council Order 2001, which introduced mandatory Continuing Professional Development (CPD) to the profession from 2003, required all Podiatrists to maintain an up to date record of their CPD activity which they could submit for inspection if called to do so by the HPC.

Why PebblePad?

The Society has been able to provide members with a flexible, cost effective system for recording CPD. The existing tool on the Society’s members’ area of their website only allows members to list CPD in terms of course attendance. PebblePad has provided a platform on which members can build and personalise a detailed framework of their CPD activity and organise it in such a way that it can be submitted to the HPC if the member should be called for the bi-annual CPD Audit. The HPC CPD standards are central to the way CPD is captured in that it encourages participation in a wide range of CPD, while having reflection as a central part of the recording process. Both these factors have been integral objectives of the implementation of an eportfolio to the SCP as a professional membership organisation and Trade Union.

The purpose

By introducing PebblePad to the SCP the Union Learning Fund project team were aiming to achieve at least 90% of members having a portfolio which could demonstrate compliance with the HPC standards for CPD and to give members greater awareness of the importance and need to participate in reflective practice as an integral part of their CPD. The project aimed to provide empirical evidence to the governing council of the SCP to demonstrate the potential value of using an eportfolio such as PebblePad. In addition,
the project aimed to increase the level of confidence and use of information communication technology (ICT) by the membership.

The approach

The Union Learning Fund project team set up a pilot of the use of PebblePad. After identifying the need for an eportfolio and scoping the project, 500 licences were distributed to members via a network of Union Learning Representatives (ULRs) who represent, promote and help members address their learning needs within National Health Service (NHS) organisations as well as Private Practice. Before issuing licences, members were asked about their current methods of recording CPD, and their attitude and confidence in ICT. They were also questioned about their expectations and predicted barriers to using PebblePad. The licences were issued to groups of members, i.e. NHS Podiatry departments or groups of Branch members. All those who were issued with a licence in the pilot needed to have access to a ULR, as the training and support would be cascaded via the Union Learning Fund team to the ULRs. The ULR would then act as a trainer and mentor.

The result

A total number of 471 licences were issued during stage one of the project. Questionnaires were sent by email to all those who were issued a licence. A total number of 228 questionnaires were received back, giving a response rate of 48%.

12 months after using PebblePad a second questionnaire was sent to only those who responded to the first questionnaire. This was done using the Survey Monkey web based questionnaire tool, to both streamline the administrative processes as well as make analysis easier.

A fundamental question of this survey was to identify the number of members who had a CPD portfolio in place:

- 31% of respondents to the first questionnaire said they ‘currently have a system in place to record their CPD’.
- 3% use the SCP web based CPD recorder.

After using PebblePad for one year:

- 13% use PebblePad as their only system.
- 46% use PebblePad, but back-up with a paper based system.
- 4% continue to “stuff paper records into a box or file.”

After the implementation of PebblePad the number of members reporting to have a CPD recording system in place rose from 31% of responders to 92%.
When we asked about ICT confidence prior to PebblePad use:

- 43% said they were confident or very confident.
- 47% OK.
- 9% will have a go, or needed support.

After using PebblePad for 12 months:

- 15% said they were more confident in using ITC.

Before using PebblePad the main perceived barrier to use was reported as a lack of time, either at home or work. After holding PebblePad licences for one year, 57% reported that their main barrier to use was a lack of time at home and/or work.

The impact

- The introduction of an eportfolio to a membership organisation increased the membership awareness of CPD and reflective practice, with a large increase in the number of members who had a CPD system in place.
- There was a small increase in the number of members who reported that their confidence in using information communication technology had improved.
- Anecdotal evidence showed that PebblePad has become popular with members. An example of this was where members from Wales, who were prevented from taking part in the pilot due to funding restrictions, approached the Society via the Delegate Assembly to ask the Society if all areas of membership could have access to the system.
- The Faculty of Podiatric Surgery is assessing the potential to use PebblePad for an assessment tool within their professional training process.

Lessons learnt

Despite CPD being a mandatory part of professional registration, CPD continues to be a low priority for members, with recording of actual CPD activity in any format an even greater problem. Time pressures are the most prominent reason given by members for not involving themselves in the recording of activity via PebblePad. This was enhanced during the project due to the implementation of the Health and Social Care Bill which was to fundamentally change the way the NHS services are managed and delivered. This organisational change impacted members workload and motivation.

At a mid-way stage in the project it was revealed that only 69% had accessed their account and only 24% were actively using their accounts or had used them in the last 3 months. An in-depth look revealed that some members failed to receive their login details because the email generated by PebblePad was rejected by their server/computer firewall. This continues to be a problem for members who give NHS email addresses. This problem should have been followed up at the initial licence allocation stage, as it did prevent licencees from accessing the system.
Lack of training opportunities for PebblePad users was identified to be a major barrier to use. More PebblePad training was required by many members. The initial plan was to train ULRs to use the system, and then they would cascade training to their colleagues. Unfortunately this system was not as successful as hoped due to the lack of ICT confidence shown by some ULRs. Also, many ULRs found that they were not able to take time off to attend PebblePad training due to staff shortages in the NHS.

Overall an emphasis needs to be placed on support at the licence issue stage, to ensure that licencees activate their account as soon as they receive their login passwords. This needs to be backed up with at least one training session and access to a mentor to encourage, support and provide on-going training where required.

Ultimately, however, the inactivity around the use of PebblePad could be symptomatic of the profession’s attitude to recording CPD and reflective practice. It identifies a major need by members for the SCP to provide more support, guidance and resources to help them ensure meaningful and worthwhile CPD is undertaken across all sections of the profession.

**In brief – making the case for PebblePad**

- PebblePad can provide professional membership organisations with a low cost solution to assist members with recording and storing CPD, which can be easily accessed and used across the profession.
- The use of PebblePad can provide a tool to help members with poor ICT skills gain confidence and provide a platform for them to ‘have a go’ at using ICT.
- The reflective platform used by PebblePad allows the user to participate in reflective practice and can help make it part of the routine CPD recording process.

To view this case study in an electronic format please visit this link:
www.pebblebash.co.uk/2012/pdf/cs20.pdf
A music teacher’s development – documenting the journey for accreditation

Jennifer Rowley, Peter Dunbar-Hall, Madeleine Bell, and John Taylor
Sydney Conservatorium of Music, University of Sydney, Australia

Chosen theme(s)

Teaching/Professional practice: Programme/Course Development

The background context

The eportfolio was introduced incrementally at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music over a 3 year period, supported by a University of Sydney Teaching Improvement Grant. The funding provided access to support services and funds for academics’ time in their research agenda to undertake its introduction into the degree program. Accreditation to become a music teacher was introduced by the NSW Institute of Teachers (NSW IoT) in 2008 and we, at the Music Education Unit, decided an electronic portfolio was the best vehicle for collecting evidence for the mandated graduate teacher professional standards. We began by engaging in a curriculum remodelling of the degree to incorporate eportfolio tasks into discrete units of study within the degree program. We had no idea that this would be such a powerful learning tool for the students and so we watched them take ownership of their learning and engage in the personal learning environment that PebblePad provided.

Why PebblePad?

Institutional requirement… but we like PebblePad!

The purpose

We were aiming to ensure the students (and the degree program) met NSW IoT accreditation standards. We were also aiming to enhance the student learning experience.

The rationale driving this was to engage students in the ways in which eportfolios could be used to support their developing concept of their roles as trainee music educators. It was important to model good teaching and learning for these teachers in training, so we highlighted the use of eportfolios as a medium for reflection and self-evaluation.

It became apparent that the electronic folio was a perfect vehicle and impetus for developing technological skills. The self-reflection and the development of the technological skills became apparent very soon after the project began. These outcomes of the project were in addition to the original intentions, which related directly to graduate employment through the ability to demonstrate students’ responses to government accreditation...
requirements for teachers. Through consideration of these multiple layers of meaning of eportfolios, we position them as new ways of preparing music teachers for the future.

**The approach**

To begin with we were focused on the collection of evidence for the portfolio so that the students could prove the graduate teacher professional standards were met. When we began in 2008 the University did not have a “platform” and was only trialing PebblePad (and another platform) and so the students were asked to document and present the evidence through any multimedia medium. The students were creatively designing their own learning ‘story’ and it was evident as they progressed that they were designing the curriculum for us as teacher educators. From 2008 it was decided that we had to have the students’ voice in this project and so when PebblePad arrived at our institution in May 2009 we had already initiated students into the purpose of an eportfolio (the project concluded in December 2011).

The background, history and multiple intentions of the project are described above, especially how its aim was to address university expectations, music education proficiencies, and official government teacher accreditation criteria. The research relied on action research in which each stage of the project was used to generate the next stage. Interviews with students were held regularly, students were trained on a one-to-one basis in the technological aspects of PebblePad, and student eportfolios were analysed for their content, mode of delivery, and usefulness.

Our project’s journey (with various roadblocks, challenges and constraints of the development of eportfolios through PebblePad) became a form of curriculum evaluation. This is a necessary evil as it usually closes more doors than it opens but in our experience it provided a pathway to a reinterpretation of the degree program. This, in turn, provided a new way to ensure that future music educators are comprehensively prepared for their profession.

**The result**

We achieved what we set out to achieve and more. As teachers, we regenerated our curriculum using evidence from students about what they thought was important. We also provided evidence to the accreditation body that students could demonstrate the professional standards as required. For students, the development of their eportfolio provided evidence of abilities, utilisation of technology skills, and thinking about job application and placement. It also acted as a site for learning, for clarifying what their studies were about, for thinking about who they were becoming, and for reflection and self-evaluation. In these ways we position eportfolios as an advantageous new undertaking in the preparation of future music educators.

**The impact**

As an eportfolio was established to give a snapshot of the learning outcomes of this four-year degree program, it drew attention to the aims of the degree as a whole, its officially accredited professional status, and the range of skills it develops. Its implementation
made explicit many issues often left implicit in music teacher preparation. One of the main aims was to address the competencies required to be met by graduate teachers as a result of completing the degree program. This meant searching and selecting evidence to demonstrate they “possess the requisite knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to plan for and manage successful learning” (NSW IoT, 2009, p2).

So what did our students actually “do” in PebblePad? They were asked to complete tasks incrementally as they progressed through the degree. In Year 2, they completed the “about me” in a process towards developing the CV section so that a resume could be developed for each student. In Year 3, they were required to assign evidence to selected professional standards – of which there were 49 to choose from. The 49 professional graduate teacher standards were set as a template in PebblePad and students uploaded artifacts (or assets) that were either collected from practice teaching or assessments they completed at University in a variety of subjects. For example, a student uploaded a video of an interview she did for a Cultural Diversity in Music Education subject and that met element 7 of the professional standards: “Teachers are actively engaged members of their profession and the wider community” (NSW IoT, 2009, p 14). Another student uploaded an original composition and then a sound file of the recording she made with a junior school band that were playing her composition. This was evidence for the element “Demonstrate research-based knowledge of the pedagogies of the content/discipline(s) taught” (NSW IoT, 2009, p 4).

In these examples the students were addressing competencies in a defined template but they were also developing their own learning story. We emphasised that it was not about ‘storage’ but really about the ‘story’ of what they learn and how they used that learning to become a graduate teacher. In 4th year they commenced developing a webfolio in PebblePad. By this stage they had enough understanding of the platform and the technology requirements to synthesize what was expected and to create their own webfolio – or ‘story’.

**Lessons learnt**

During implementation of the project a number of issues, often unforeseen, emerged. First, the student perceptions of eportfolios changed from the initial survey asking them what they thought the purpose of an eportfolio in Music education was. Initial responses included a place to collect “…. ‘stuff’ for a job interview in 2 years’ time”. The students moved away from this concept – but not entirely towards an understanding of, and a pride in, their learning outcomes.

Second, through the interaction with PebblePad the students’ identities as ‘digital natives’ appeared to develop. They were able to see the relationship between the technology and the learning task.

We also saw the role of eportfolios in representing students’ multiple musical and pedagogic identities as they took ownership and created their webfolios. Many designed elaborate webfolios with personal aspirations whilst others restricted the webfolio to their achievements over the 4 years at university only.
We were pleased with the process of curriculum renewal that took place as a result of the mapping of eportfolios across the subjects of the degree program. This meant that eportfolios replaced existing assessment tasks as we redesigned the tasks in relation to eportfolios and the PebblePad platform. As a result the eportfolios became a site of learning for the students. They valued the process and were proud of the product.

In brief – making the case for PebblePad

- PebblePad encourages students to ‘post’ and ‘comment’ (like social media sites such as FaceBook).
- It looks professional for graduate employment for our graduate music teachers.
- It provides the nexus between teaching and learning
- It encourages higher order thinking skills as students have to analyse the assessment tasks and then synthesise these in the process of creating the webfolio. They are allowed to comment and give their own opinion about how it has met the requirements of the set task.

References:


To view this case study in an electronic format please visit this link: www.pebblebash.co.uk/2012/pdf/cs21.pdf
PebblePad in the Operating Theatre – a good prognosis.

Andi Sambrook
Department of Operating Practice, University of Surrey, UK

Chosen theme(s)

*Learning*: Reflection, Employability
*Teaching/Professional practice*: Managing e-Assessment
*Organisation*: Student Satisfaction, Cost Saving, Environmental Impact, Managing Organisational Process

The background context

An Operating Department Practitioner (ODP) is a person who works in and around operating theatres. Their role is to provide skilled assistance to surgeons and anaesthetists in carrying out intricate and complex procedures and work alongside healthcare professionals in order to provide a high standard of patient focused care throughout a patient’s operative journey.

The role is primarily focused behind the closed doors of the operating suite and as such ODPs are an unseen and relatively unknown group within the hospital environment. In total in the UK there are less than 11,000 ODPs. It is a very specialist role which has developed as a profession allied to health. Most people assume that individuals working in theatres are nurses; however this specialist role is also technical in nature and brings a different professional into the perioperative environment working alongside surgeons, anaesthetists and nurses. It could be considered as an advanced technical, caring role.

It is in this context that a diploma programme is run in the UK for the National Health Service (NHS) via higher education institutes. In total there are over thirty programmes with student numbers varying from 10 to 100 per institution. This results in approximately 700 trainees per year.

At the University of Surrey we have an intake of approximately thirty-five students a year. The programme is made up of both theoretical and practical components. The student has to demonstrate an achievement of a minimum of 3000 hours. Sixty per cent of this time is spent in the clinical practice area, specifically in theatres.

As the majority of the students’ time is spent in practice and away from the University setting, the partnership between the University and the individual NHS hospital trusts is paramount. It is important that the student is well supported from all angles. Students will be placed in the operating theatre, anaesthetic and recovery areas.

As part of the assessment process our colleagues in practice are required to mentor and supervise these students. The mentors are all qualified, registered practitioners. It is
part of their role to ensure that the student is fit to practice and has achieved a level of competency that ultimately will allow them to be registered as an ODP by the registering body, the Health Professions Council (HPC).

Why PebblePad?

- Timely feedback
- Ease of submission – no travel costs
- Window to the world
- Streamlined administration

The purpose

As part of the assessment process the students are asked to reflect on their progress. Each placement lasts from six to sixteen weeks, so during that time they have many experiences which to rationalise and reflect upon.

In the past, reflections were captured on paper and were generally written by the student towards the end of their placement. This had the disadvantage that the experience was not current and it placed a lot of work on a student at the end of the placement when actually completing clinical competencies was paramount.

Reflections are also required to be verified by the mentor. This serves two purposes: firstly to ensure that the student has valid experiences; and secondly to act as a discussion and development tool between the mentor and student. This verification also ensures that the experiences the student writes about are true experiences and not fictional. In the past this has placed a lot of work on the mentors and the students to ensure this is completed in a timely manner ready for submission.

Following completion the student had to physically submit the paper to the University. University tutors would then review and mark the reflections from an academic viewpoint. This became a long, laborious process which meant that the student would not get any meaningful feedback for up to eight weeks, by which time the student was well into their next task and therefore was unable to learn from any mistakes that they had made.

This was the initial driver for the PebblePad project, however many more benefits were realised.

The approach

The initial project scope was to simplify, process, and speed up feedback to be more timely. PebblePad was selected as a relevant tool that would enable this redesign to an eportfolio.

The format of the reflection was changed to a reflective blog to encourage students to reflect as events happened rather than many weeks after the event. The blog was then automatically shared with the mentor who could then verify the information whenever
they chose to do so. The other big advantage of this was that University tutors could also see the information at the same time and choose to comment as well.

This gave a much better way of collaborating and enabled timely interventions so that progress could be better monitored and modified. All parties could then contribute to the student’s education and experience.

**The result**

The initial reason for choosing a system like PebblePad was to speed up feedback and to develop the process which had become overly burdensome on paper.

In the end we developed a system which accomplished all of these objectives. There was also an added advantage that we were able to steer students in the right direction at the right time.

Often mentors have to supervise students in addition to doing their usual day to day tasks, causing conflict as mentors found it difficult to dedicate enough time to look at the written reflections. However, having the reflections available online allowed mentors to view them whenever and wherever they wanted. Similarly, the University tutors would normally not have seen the information until well after the event. This new way of working allowed them to view the reflections as they were written.

Another consequence was that traditionally the students had their feedback delivered via paper which meant a trip to the University. Many students are placed in trusts a long distance away from the main campus (up to 40 miles) and it is a costly journey to pick up a piece of paper. We had considered an email solution however this was not scalable and would have resulted in an administrative burden. The ability to give feedback online immediately to the student is very powerful and has now become ingrained into the experience of the student.

A further advantage is that it allows the student to take the information with them when they graduate and register, and can act as powerful evidence when job seeking.

**The impact**

Students have to complete evaluations about the programme for audit and quality purposes. We have integrated form builder into the process and students now submit evaluation forms online via PebblePad. The use of PebblePad has featured heavily in these evaluations in a very positive manner proving that we are providing a better student experience. In particular they value the timely feedback that we are now able to provide. They also appreciate the ease of submission, equating this to a reduction in travel costs.

This new process has also helped the collaborative nature of the NHS/University partnership with mentors reporting that they feel more engaged with the students’ education. It has helped to maintain our list of live mentors which traditionally has been difficult to monitor.
Finally it has streamlined administration for the tutors and exams and registry teams, freeing up much needed time. Estimated savings are an hour per student.

Lessons learnt

Prior to piloting the programme it was established that NHS firewalls are notoriously strong and could block access to PebblePad. However it was found that this was not the case. The main problem encountered was that the NHS computer framework in some trusts is not modern and so using a graphically rich based solution such as PebblePad put a strain on the infrastructure and the experience was sometimes slow.

It was found that the general level of computer literacy within the theatre environment was variable and some initial education was required for mentors.

There was an extra administration burden that had to be managed. This related to the creation of external accounts for the mentors, and technical support for the students when they failed to send the required work to the correct gateway, the space used by mentors and tutors to view the student work.

As with the implementation of any change, we found much more resistance from existing students who were used to the old paper based system than from new students. This was not a failing of PebblePad but the management of change and so we ensured that more training was available with subsequent cohorts. When the benefits of this new way of working were fully realised the resistance dissipated.

Several other issues were encountered and eventually overcome:

- A new process was required for delivering information to the external examiners – this was outside of the normal established processes.
- If a student interrupted the course for a while and then came back within a different cohort, we had to manually adjust the system to cope with this.
- Students needed guidance in terms of the length of blogs required. Some students so enjoyed creating them that far too much time was spent on them and we needed to educate them on the required length and depth of content.

The future

The success of the programme has been measured by far greater student satisfaction, with the majority highlighting the use of PebblePad as a major contributor. They have also appreciated the time and cost saving in not having to physically submit and pick up work. The use of the blog within PebblePad is now a well-established process within the operating theatre team at the University of Surrey and forms the mainstay of graded assessment in practice. It has been a very beneficial solution to the problem and has been embedded as good practice within the University. The challenge is to expand the project out to other areas within the faculty such as nursing and midwifery students. This is planned within an updated curriculum and as new processes come online we plan to integrate into these programmes with a full complement of around 4000 students.
It has helped that we are located in the same building as the University team that helps to develop and promote the introduction of new technologies throughout the University. This has meant quick and easy access to support when technical and educational issues have arisen. These have been solved promptly, ensuring that students, mentors, and university staff have a good response and experience with the product. This has allowed us to focus on the education issues rather than technical issues.

PebblePad has been a bold step for the Operating Department team to allow collaboration between geographically diverse education providers. This has enabled development and engagement of the student and enhanced the students’ experience and has allowed us to drive the development of their abilities to ensure that the end graduate is ready for immediate employment after graduation.

In brief – making the case for PebblePad

- Timely feedback
- Ease of submission – no travel costs
- Window to the world
- Streamlined administration

To view this case study in an electronic format please visit this link:
www.pebblebash.co.uk/2012/pdf/cs22.pdf
Is it acceptable to remotely supervise placement students electronically via their eportfolio reflective learning blogs?

Pritpal Singh Sembi
School of Law, Social Sciences and Communications, University of Wolverhampton, UK

Chosen theme(s)

Learning: Reflection
Teaching/Professional practice: Managing e-Assessment

The background context

I teach Film Studies BA (Hons) in the School of Humanities at the University of Wolverhampton. In the early 1990s the school validated a module template for a generic pan-subject placement learning module called ‘Student Link’. The module consisted of 3 assessed components: (a) a negotiated learning contract (10%); (b) a reflective learning diary (30%); and (c) a final evidence based portfolio (60%). The module still operates today, with exactly the same assessment, but is now known as ‘Community Link’. During the delivery of the module we often found that, whilst students were meant to create their learning diaries on a regular basis alongside their learning, most students were ‘rushing’ these diaries at the end of the module – normally very shortly before assessment submission deadlines. We also found that the level of reflection was relatively limited with reference to what was expected from the assessment criteria. Recently, the number of Film Studies placements has increased dramatically year-on-year and we wanted to find a way to logistically improve the operation, delivery and student results of this assessment component.

Why PebblePad?

I have been able to supervise geographically disparate placement students effectively via their weekly eportfolio blogs, delivered via PebblePad. To visit the students personally, and regularly, would be logistically impossible and potentially counter-productive. PebblePad has allowed me to ‘keep in touch’ with these students alongside regular submission of summative assessment. Both formative and summative written feedback from the tutor allows the students on-going dialogue at a distance, providing better communication than is usually possible face-to-face.

The purpose

Overall, we wanted to (a) encourage students to complete their diaries on a regular basis, (b) improve student reflective material to improve grades, and (c) be able to supervise students more effectively and efficiently. Obviously, being a reflective journal, it made sense to encourage regular student contribution. Improving student reflection helped
students to meet the module aims and outcomes. Electronic supervision facilitated more efficient delivery of the module.

The approach

We designed a new form within the ‘form builder’ function in PebblePad. Students would ‘fill out’ this form on a regular basis – usually after each full day on placement – and this would then be shared with the module leader. We decided to set up a new gateway and use the PebblePad blog function for students to share their diary entries with their tutor.

The result

After the initial pilot we now supervise every student placement in this way. The method has now been in operation for 4 years. Other subjects are interested in implementing this method of supervision too and I am running internal training sessions to share this use of PebblePad and provide additional support. Student grades have improved and electronic diary entries are, on average, more than twice the length of their paper-based equivalents.

The impact

Managing e-assessment

This process has made a massive positive impact on staff resources. The evidence for now, however, is largely autobiographical and anecdotal. I am now able to spend approximately one hour per week reading and commenting on all student blogs. I have a full understanding of their experiences on placement and I am able to intervene if/when necessary. During staff focus groups I found that staff spent an average of eight hours supervising each student on placement - which was mostly done via email and telephone – whereas each student supervision electronically probably only requires approximately two hours in total.

Reflection

Having run some student focus groups (transcriptions available on request) we found that students found blogging quite motivating – especially those days when they thought they had achieved little until they reflected – with tutor comments helping them to improve their placement practice. Students also found a structured ‘form’ to complete was much better than a blank page to reflect within. Students explained that they were happy to be supervised electronically, with telephone or email support when necessary, since they knew face-to-face support was available if needed. Students actually preferred us not to visit in person since they would find this ‘embarrassing’. Overall students said that they would definitely recommend the PebblePad e-supervision.

Lessons learnt

I learned that, used properly, technology can have a very positive and ongoing benefit for placement supervision. Having said this, some students simply could not get their heads
around what is required for reflective writing and others needed extra encouragement to deliver their diaries in this way. Some had a deep-seated prejudice towards PebblePad, sometimes because of Flash compatibility issues, but many of these students still felt that e-supervision was a positive experience once they engaged with the process.

In brief – making the case for PebblePad

- Very efficient (and environmentally sound) method of placement supervision for module leader.
- Students were more than happy to be supervised electronically.
- Student reflection appears to have improved.
- Student engagement with the assessment component has improved.

To view this case study in an electronic format please visit this link:
www.pebblebash.co.uk/2012/pdf/cs23.pdf
Empowering PebblePad users through a University wide support forum

Sandra J Stewart and Alissa Haddad
Charles Sturt University, Australia

Chosen theme(s)

Organisation: Student Satisfaction, Cost/Time Saving

The background context

PebblePad and the PebblePad support forum are available for all students at CSU regardless of study mode or geographical location. Not all students will use PebblePad as part of their course or subject structure.

The PebblePad forum was set up within the Charles Sturt University (CSU) Interact online environment. Its creation was a joint staff and student initiative. Students who venture down the PebblePad stepping stones as part of a course, or through their own exploration, have the option of the using the forum to access asynchronous online support in addition to that already provided by the university.

The PebblePad forum provides assistance and scaffolding for a diverse community of learners. The forum is a place where students can go to seek answers by reading the questions and the answers already provided by staff or student mentors. They may also choose to ask questions specific to their own PebblePad learning needs.

The forum provides support to students for the technical, practical and often emotional aspects of entering into a journey within a personal learning and eportfolio environment. The forum monitoring demonstrates collaboration between CSU staff and student mentors. Through utilising student mentors, the forum has taken some of the load off the PebblePad team by providing a place for students to seek answers to questions that may otherwise have required one-to-one help or extra instruction from a staff member.

If an answer is not available immediately an acknowledgement of the request and words of encouragement enable the learner to feel that their appeal for assistance is being heard. Student mentors are able to base their support and encouragement on their own experiences as student users of PebblePad. PebblePad support staff and subject coordinators are able to provide answers beyond what the mentors can offer and their involvement, support and encouragement is vital to the forum’s continuing success.

The purpose and approach

New technology can be daunting and confusing, especially when an assessment is at stake. The PebblePad forum provides an ‘off-course’ area where questions can be asked
about using PebblePad, as well as gaining support for the technical and practical issues that may arise for students new to the PebblePad environment.

The forum was created when a student (now a mentor) suggested to a staff member who had helped her with PebblePad that an online forum, away from a subject site, could provide a place for students to find help and direct answers to PebblePad questions during their initial use and application of the system.

After this initial suggestion it took little time for the PebblePad support staff member to arrange to have the forum placed on the CSU Interact website. The PebblePad forum has been in operation since 23rd February 2010 with the first post illustrating a curiosity for students not using PebblePad as part of their course.

"Hello....a new forum...what is pebble pad exactly???

Initially staff alone monitored the forum with the student who suggested it posting numerous questions. The forum then evolved in an organic, natural manner as students moved from being question askers to answering other student enquiries and providing encouragement to those daunted by the initial PebblePad experience. Student mentoring on the PebblePad forum had commenced.

"I moved from a person who asks questions to a student who is able to provide support to others. In doing so I continually re-visit known skills and try new ideas so that I may help others. It is much easier to source information when you are not stressing about an assessment." (Student Mentor (SM))

The forum mentors have built up an extensive list of PebblePad resources. They try to lead students to the resources that will support them rather than just providing the answers. This helps to encourage other students to build up their own PebblePad resources.

"My learning has become more empowered and by mentoring others I support my own use of PebblePad through refreshing my knowledge, learning for myself and from other students." (SM)

The result and impact

One student forum user described her introduction to PebblePad as overwhelming. She felt daunted by both the task and the subject requirement to use PebblePad as an assessment tool. As a distance education student with minimal IT skills she felt that she needed to acquire PebblePad skills quickly and with clear explanations. She recalled seeing the forum so “quietly entered” and read what other students were asking but

“(t)hey were using unfamiliar terminology which perpetuated an even greater fear of the unknown.” (Student User (SU))
She returned to the forum many times for questions and support, even seeking answers to questions that she thought sounded ridiculous. Having a mentor available within a dedicated forum helped to ease her fears, and her PebblePad skills increased. She feels that the support not only scaffolds the individuals’ learning, but that the learning of the community has also developed.

The forum is “… an incredibly beneficial learning space outside the domains of the virtual classroom”. (SU)

Students asking similar questions and supporting each other creates a sense of empowerment as skills are acquired.

“It is less intimidating and more constructive when students feel supported in their technological learning outside their subject classroom. I even called one of the mentors my PebblePad Goddess.” (SU)

Student mentors are able to see other students’ confidence improve and can appreciate the sense of achievement when users post on the forum that a task has been completed.

“As a student mentor I can truly empathise and state how worthwhile it is to persevere about the possibilities of PebblePad, for that is my lived experience.”(SM)

The sharing of webfolios that are not connected to the course being undertaken gives some students a better visual idea of the final product and how it will work.

Organisation: Student Satisfaction:

The proof of student satisfaction is in the level of use and the comments made by students on the forum. There are more students viewing posts than asking questions, so it is appropriate to assume that some answers are being found by looking at questions previously asked by others. From the beginning of the forum in late February 2010 to April 4, 2012 there have been 1,112 posts with 250 distinct posters. There have been 233,585 distinct reads of posts on the forum with 4,863 users reading one message or more. The PebblePad forum has itself become an online resource for students.

Organisation: Time (and cost) Saving for staff members

Educational designers (ED) work closely with academics using PebblePad within their teaching. The EDs are aware that often the academics are new to PebblePad and are learning about it alongside the students. Knowing that they can direct their students to a student-support resource such as the PebblePad forum provides a bit of a ‘safety net’.

“Every time I set up a gateway I tell lecturers about the PP forum and encourage them to send students to it.” (ED)

Being able to direct students to the forum instead of relying upon one-on-one support also represents a considerable time (and cost) saving for staff.
The CSU ePortfolio Team member who is currently responsible for supporting PebblePad use across the University believes that it is clear from the postings and replies within the PebblePad forum that the support that student mentors provide has greatly benefitted the students. She believes that the mentors provide the type of support that is the most reassuring of all – that of a fellow student.

“The PP forum has become an exemplar in terms of a CSU-wide Community of Learners.” (ED)

Lessons learnt

Support offered outside of a subject or course through an online space can enhance the student experience of using PebblePad for assessment or personal learning. An online forum allows distance education and internal students to have convenient, easily accessible, anytime help with PebblePad. The opportunity for staff and students to work co-operatively on a project such as this provides a valuable environment of mutual respect.

In brief – making the case for PebblePad

• Through an online, university-wide forum PebblePad users have a place to seek support and encouragement outside of subject or course participation.
• The dedicated learning space empowers a community of learners through supports and scaffolds.
• Students and staff working together in an online, asynchronous support forum can share the workload and support the different needs of students.
• Students acting as peer mentors learn again as they teach and extend their knowledge of PebblePad use.

To view this case study in an electronic format please visit this link:
www.pebblebash.co.uk/2012/pdf/cs24.pdf
Evaluation of the student experience of using PebblePad as a tool to support the Professional Development Portfolio (PDP)

Kim Stuart, Leonie Siddons, and Robert Farmer
Division of Occupational Therapy, The University of Northampton, UK

Chosen theme(s)

Learning: Reflection, Employability
Teaching/Professional practice: Programme/Course Development, Continuing Professional Development

The background context

Increasingly, employers in Health and Social Care look for specific examples which provide evidence of the qualities, skills and competencies they are seeking when they read application forms and CVs, and during interviews. The Health Professions Council (HPC) requires practitioners to demonstrate a commitment to Continuing Professional Development (CPD) through the use of a portfolio. The Professional Development Portfolio (PDP) process within the University of Northampton enables students to develop the skills needed to maintain and produce a portfolio of their learning and development within the field of Occupational Therapy.

The PDP pilot is being undertaken across Level 4 Occupational Therapy undergraduate students commencing September 2011. All Level 4 students and personal academic tutors were provided with a PebblePad account (7 staff and 66 students). The PDP has been developed for use with PebblePad across all undergraduate levels and is designed to reflect the progression of personal, academic and professional skills required for their first professional post. The PDP documentation to support this process reflects the current standards within the university and moves forwards, recognising the unique position of health students requiring registration and evidence of engagement with CPD. The content of the PDP is based upon research and meets the requirements of the university and professional bodies. With the support of the Learning Technologist for eportfolios, the material was developed within the University of Northampton undergraduate modular framework.

It is envisaged that the pilot will contribute to the:

- university e-strategy by providing access to online interactive learning and teaching media;
- enhancement of the student experience through the use of a creative and innovative tool for professional development;
- wider development of the PDP within the university;
- wider development of blended learning experiences for staff and students;
- broader adoption of PebblePad within the university, particularly the School of
Health, though dissemination of the project outcomes at in-house technology enhanced learning events.

The pilot will be fully evaluated to consider the impact of PebblePad for the students and staff involved, in order to develop strategies to provide opportunities for eportfolios within the university.

Why PebblePad?

At the beginning of the Occupational Therapy PDP eportfolio project PebblePad was identified as the most appropriate and accessible tool for both the students and staff. The use of PebblePad enables students and personal academic tutors to collaborate in a timely manner whilst encouraging the students’ independent learning and their personal, academic and professional development.

PebblePad offers the opportunity for PDP to be experienced interactively between student and tutor through the creation and completion of tasks within the eportfolio. One of the most prominent features of PebblePad that encouraged its adoption for this project is the intuitive and creative nature of the eportfolios which allows the students to produce unique portfolios.

The purpose

The overall aim of the e-PDP project is to provide the students with access to current and developing technology to enhance the learning experience and to facilitate the students’ transition to being independent learners capable of fulfilling the CPD requirements when in professional practice.

The specific project aims are:

- To provide the students with a tool that enhances their engagement with the PDP process.
- To consider how PebblePad facilitates the student to develop independent learning skills.
- To explore the experience of PebblePad for staff and students.
- To embed the PDP within the BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy programme.

Therefore an evaluation of the student engagement and experience of PDP is necessary to inform future provision and development of the eportfolio.

It is a pre-requisite of registration with the HPC that Occupational Therapists engage in CPD. The introduction of the eportfolio for PDP with students, on entry to Higher Education, develops an ethos of self-management, independent learning, reflection and development of skills. PebblePad provides the vehicle for this and is a tool that can be continued once in professional practice.
The approach

The previous paper-based PDP system was reviewed to establish how student and staff engagement could be enhanced. The review identified that the approach to PDP required a more interactive and responsive format which enabled personal tutors and students to collaborate in a more efficient manner. The use of PebblePad to deliver PDP offered the opportunity to engage both staff and students within a virtual environment in which structured reflection could be engaged in by students and monitored by staff, and in which students could begin to make the transition to being more autonomous learners and learn reflective skills that would be invaluable in professional practice.

At the start of the development process academic staff and learning technologists met to discuss the requirements of the project and to decide how the resources that academic staff wanted to develop could best be constructed within PebblePad. Academic staff then conducted a thorough review and re-write of the resources, and passed these to the Learning Technology Team for creation within PebblePad. In some cases, existing asset types could be used, and in other cases custom forms and profiles were used. It was also felt that it would be useful if the Learning Technology Team provided training, both face-to-face and online, for staff and students new to PebblePad, to ensure that everyone involved in the project would be familiar with the PebblePad environment and the PDP resources.

Initially the students involved with the Occupational Therapy PDP were enrolled on a PDP gateway in PebblePad, and from there could access and copy a Webfolio which contained full instructions and information about PDP, and about the tasks for the year. Students then worked their way through the tasks set out in the Webfolio and submitted these back to the PDP gateway at appropriate points in order to share them with their personal tutor. This allowed personal tutors to view and consider assets ahead of meetings with their tutees and, where placement commitments meant that it was difficult for students to attend meetings, to keep in touch and feedback to their students electronically.

The PDP comprised four sections, each of which included various tasks to complete within PebblePad, and was set out as follows:

Part 1: Creating Your Personal Profile
- Creating your profile and CV (About Me and CV)
- Reflecting on your skills (Profile)

Part 2: Developing Your Skills
- Creating an action plan (Action Plan)
- Personal reflection (Blog)
- Aspirational profile (Form)

Part 3: Practice Placement
- Reflection on practice (Form)
Part 4: Independent Learning

- Update your CV and profile (About Me and CV)
- Transition to Level 5 (Form)

The result

The use of PebblePad as part of the PDP process will be fully evaluated at the end of the academic year. Funding has been approved from the University as part of our Undergraduate Research Bursaries at Northampton (URB@N) scheme to assist with the review and evaluation. More information about the URB@N scheme, including links to project outcomes, is available at: http://bit.ly/pb201214.

Some of the identifiable short term achievements are:

- Each student has an individual eportfolio and have identified that they would retain this in their professional career. Several tutors have remarked on the importance of student ownership of the eportfolio.
- Embedding lifelong learning into the students’ professional career.
- Facilitates on-going interaction between student and personal tutor.
- Facilitates the development of independent learning skills of the student.
- Online learning and support on use of PebblePad.
- Embedded PDP within the Occupational Therapy undergraduate programme.
- Some initial data provides evidence of an effective transition to delivering PDP through PebblePad.

Feedback from staff involved with the project has been overwhelmingly positive, as the following comments illustrate:

- PebblePad “is something they can take with them into professional life at a relatively small cost. There are so many elements that are useful, particularly the reflective logs.” (Occupation Therapy Tutor 1)
- PebblePad “is easy to navigate around and use. It is attractive and simple in design keeping the students interested” (Occupational Therapy Tutor 2)
- PebblePad enables students to develop the key skill areas of “reflection through an electronic element that could be delivered flexibly” (Occupational Therapy Tutor 3)
- PebblePad “is accessible in a technological age of online learning” (Occupational Therapy Tutor 3)
- With PebblePad “more information can be obtained about how the student thinks, feels and is managing and engaging than with the previous [paper based] PDP method as students variably did not complete the paperwork.” (Occupational Therapy Tutor 1)
- “I had expected to spend more time training students and to have received more emails from students requesting support. However, the PebblePad Help Movies and own bespoke online support materials [created using Adobe Captivate] seem to have provided the majority of students with all the technical guidance they need to successfully engage with PebblePad.” (Learning Technologist)
The impact

As part of the PDP the students are required to become independent learners, responsible for managing their eportfolio. This has provided the opportunity for the students to develop the following skills:

• Higher Education Key Skills
• Personal, academic and professional skills
• Reflection
• Employability

This can be evidenced through the continued use of PebblePad by students and staff engaging with the PDP process. As the PDP is an integral component of the programme, student engagement is monitored and from initial consultation it is evident that there is growth in personal and professional development skills. This is reflected in progression in academic and practice components of the programme during allocated PDP tasks.

Lessons learnt

• Timing of introduction/training to PebblePad is crucial in enabling the student to become familiar with the format of the eportfolio and its functions.
• Creating online materials provides a very efficient and cost-effective way of assisting students who want to engage with PebblePad.
• Content of training needs to reflect the actual tasks required of the student in order to embed learning in action thereby contributing to the development of independent learning skills.
• Skill development of staff and students is recognised as a blended learning opportunity and engaging staff and students together in the initial process of using PebblePad may contribute to greater collaboration within the PDP process.
• Maintaining engagement with the PDP through PebblePad needs to be explored in more detail to highlight how to best facilitate continued use by the student whilst encourage independent learning.

In brief – making the case for PebblePad

Learning (Reflection) & Teaching (Programme/Course Development)

PebblePad has allowed us to create a set of documents and activities which explain the PDP processes and which engage students directly in the process of reflection. Because contact with personal academic tutors is limited, the use of gateways to engage staff and students has allowed much closer monitoring of, and feedback on, the PDP than was possible with the previous paper-based version. This has led to greater engagement with the PDP and to higher quality PDPs being produced by the students. However, it is important to note that the greater levels of engagement are not simply a result of moving from paper-based to electronic resources; rather, the intuitive, creative and pedagogically focused nature of PebblePad, combined with the carefully planned development of support materials and activities (which could not have been easily developed in any other systems), were crucial to the success of the project.
Learning (Employability) & Teaching (Continuing Professional Development)

The PDP closely mirrors the CPD which students need to evidence in order to find work in their chosen field. Because the use of PebblePad has contributed to the increased quality and engagement with the PDPs, this is improving students’ employability prospects by helping them to become independent, autonomous learners and to clearly evidence and articulate their skills and competencies. As students can use their PebblePad account in professional practice they will benefit greatly from a more seamless move from the academic to the professional environment.

To view this case study in an electronic format please visit this link:
www.pebblebash.co.uk/2012/pdf/cs25.pdf
PebblePad profiles for enhanced employability and reflexivity in the arts

Eti Wade  
School of Art, Design and Media, The University of West London, UK

Chosen theme(s)

Learning: Reflection, Graduate Attributes, Employability

The background context

This case study is based in the Photography Department in the Field of Art and Design, School of Art, Design and Media.

The University of West London (UWL) prides itself on an agenda of widening participation and many of our students come from non-traditional backgrounds to academia. Progressing through the programme, students go through a series of modules covering a range of technical and intellectual skills. Sitting for assessments in these discrete modules, students often miss out on comprehending the bigger picture of their overall progression and development and when reaching the third year cannot clearly articulate the abilities and competencies gained in their education.

For my level 6 (third and final year of the BA course) ‘Professional Portfolio’ module, a new module designed and taught for the first time in 2010-2011, I created a PebblePad profile called the ‘Photography Employability Profiler’. The ‘Professional Portfolio’ module was designed to support students in preparing for employment in the photo-imaging industry. The photo-imaging industry, like most creative industries, is highly competitive and success in gaining employment is achieved through personal initiative, strong technical and creative abilities, self-confidence, good presentation skills, and an excellent photographic portfolio. Students’ ability to talk about their skills and competencies in a confident and informed manner is a major factor affecting their level of success in gaining photo-imaging industry related employment.

Why PebblePad?

I have always been an early adopter and am excited about the pedagogic possibilities presented by new technologies. As soon as PebblePad was introduced at the university, I saw its potential as a tool for personal reflection, leading on to empowerment through understanding and ability to articulate one’s own skills and competencies. I have introduced PebblePad as a tool for reflection in all three years of the Photography BA and Foundation degrees we teach and have in particular concentrated on developing learning tools to guide reflection on learning and personal development. I have utilised the PebblePad Profile Builder and designed a profile to guide students’ personal reflection upon their abilities and skills. The further stages built into the profile, which
require the student to either evidence a competency or devise an action plan for further development in response to a specific profile question, makes the profile a comprehensive and effective tool for this purpose.

Making the profile available to the students through the gateway and setting it to be ‘copied and published’ back into the gateway by the students makes students’ work through the semester available to the tutor from the start.

Being able to support progress, give formative feedback at any stage of the semester, guide students’ work, and correct and clear misunderstandings through the gateway makes PebblePad particularly suited for setting up an on-going supportive learning environment.

The purpose

One of the central issues affecting student success in gaining employment upon graduation, according to Jenny Moon (2004), is their lack of self-awareness and their inability to recognise and account for their acquired skills and abilities. She claims that students have been found to be unable to account for their learning and gained abilities, which affected their chances of promoting themselves effectively to potential employers.

On the BA Photography and Digital Imaging, taught at UWL, students study a modular programme, which makes this ability to account for personal overall development even more tricky. The discreet study elements and assessment regime often becomes fragmented with students not being able to see their development holistically.

My aim was to create a tool that will help engender a sense of achievement and development, create a sense of ownership of learning and knowledge, empower students, and enhance their employability. This was to be achieved by guiding them through a process of reflection upon their level of skill and ability at the end of their three-year Photography BA course as they become graduates.

The approach

My starting point was to look for sources that define students’ skills and abilities at the end of a degree programme.

I looked at three main sources to help me design the profile questions. These were: the Programme Learning Outcomes; Skillset skills required for entry into the photo-imaging industry; and the UWL Graduate Attributes document.

The Programme Learning Outcomes, re-written for a major re-design of the BA Photography and Digital Imaging programme in 2010, offered the most valuable set of statements on which many of the questions were based. The learning outcome statements, which were used by our team to design the programme, were made available to students in module documentation but students for the most part do not know how to make sense of the learning outcome statements in their programme documents.
BA students in their third year, approaching the end of their degree studies should be very close to achieving the Programme Learning Outcomes. In addition, Programme Learning Outcomes as opposed to Module Learning Outcomes account for overall learning hence they offer a tool for reflecting on student learning holistically.

The skillset papers regarding the Photo-Imaging industry specify skills and competencies desired by the photo-imaging industry and have guided the re-design of the programme.

The Graduate Attributes document is a set of statements that guides the university in designing programmes and assessing ‘graduateness’.

The questions in the profile have been worded in relation to competencies. Aiming to ensure that all students have a clear understanding of the question, most questions have two tiers, with the second tier being about the actual practical things a student having the competency would be able to do.

**Example 1**

For the subject-specific, practical skill category learning outcome stating that students should be able to ‘Photograph professionally in complex and unpredictable contexts requiring selection and application from a wide range of innovative or standard photographic techniques’ upon graduation, the following competency question was written and included in the profiler:

1. **Can you select from a wide range of standard or innovative photographic techniques?**

   And the following practical things the student would be able to do were:

   - *Would you know what photographic equipment, cameras and other imaging tools would be appropriate for specific image production requirements and in relation to space and lighting conditions?*

The self-grading in response to the competency questions were on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being ‘No I can’t’ and 5 being ‘Can do well’.

For the follow on stage, ‘Finish and Evidence’, students were guided to reflect on an instance where they demonstrated this competency in an assignment or a work experience situation. In many instances proper evidencing required the incorporation of the students’ photographic work and they were instructed to include images as evidence where appropriate and to use the text box to explain what it was that the image presented demonstrated.
Example 2

For the Knowledge and Understanding category learning outcome, ‘With minimum guidance can transform abstract concepts towards a given purpose and design innovative solutions to photographic presentation and communication’, two questions were designed and included in the profile.

1. Can you transform abstract concepts towards a given purpose?
   - How confident are you in developing a photographic approach to illustrate abstract concepts such as, for example, joy, pain, possession etc.

2. Can you design innovative solutions to photographic presentation and communication?

The second question did not have a second part, because it was felt that the first part was clear enough for students to be able to evaluate their competency in this category.

The profile was part of a comprehensive webfolio of preparation for employment in the photographic industry and was a required assessment element for the module.

The profile was published to the course gateway at the start of the semester and the students were given a whole semester to complete it, alongside the other assignments compiled in the webfolio. Progress on the profile was regularly monitored by the tutor, and students who were lagging behind were coaxed with encouraging messages. The gateway was set so that all students were allowed to publish, view and comment to encourage the sharing of good practice.

The result

Students were required to undertake the profile as an assessment element and all students engaged in the process. The difficulty anticipated was that not all students would work at an appropriate level of reflection and some would not go beyond a superficial level. This is one of the potential difficulties with reflective activity that Moon (2004) identifies in her paper.

The problems encountered in the students’ work with the profile included some students who did not read the questions properly or did but did not think through their answers (work at a deep level of reflection). Very few students set up ‘action plans’, which might be because the ‘action plan’ asset is more complex and elaborate than the ‘ability’ asset. Most students viewed this as a paper exercise that they needed to get through. All problems were dealt with through tutor monitoring of student work and formative feedback given through the gateway throughout the semester.

At the end of the module students indicated that the profile had been useful to them and that being asked to reflect upon their current level of skill in varied aspects of their academic and professional progress was useful. This benefit was more apparent
with those students who actively engaged with the process and engaged in deep and meaningful reflection.

I am now running a study, using a similarly designed profile with level 4 (first year of the degree course) students, which will involve focus groups at the end of the academic year.

**The impact**

According to Moon (2004, p. 7), “(r)eflection [upon learning] is important in employability ... as a means for students to gain, maintain awareness of, express and explore their abilities in general and particularly in recruitment processes”. The students’ engagement with the ‘Photography Employability Profiler’ directs and encourages reflection which is expected to enable them to be conscious of their degree of readiness for industry. Through a process which potentially enhances their ability to articulate this readiness, it is anticipated that students should gain increased confidence in approaching and dealing with potential employers within the photo-imaging industry. This effect is of particular importance with students from non-traditional backgrounds who often lack the self-confidence needed to engage with industry.

The use of programme learning outcomes in this way is now being extended to all three levels of the degree programme and students are being asked to use the profiles as part of their employability skills programme throughout their education. In asking students to engage with the profile in their first year of study, students are effectively invited to become active agents in their own professional and personal development, to evaluate their own progress against the level learning outcomes, and devise action plans to improve skills and competencies they perceive as lacking.

My work with first year students is part of a programme of preparedness for employability, which is introduced at the start of the second semester of the first year and accompanies the students’ journey through their three year degree, enhancing the students’ abilities to account for their own learning and to take ownership of it.

**Lessons learnt**

- The PebblePad Profile Builder is an ideal tool for guided reflection upon learning; it allows the tutor to design a customised questionnaire relating to any aspect of the students’ learning which students then use to reflect through scoring and evidence. Having the action plan as an option within this structure guides students to take charge of their learning and development and become independent, life long learners.
- Reflection upon learning is not easy for many students especially if they have not been guided to engage in reflective activity before hand.
- To save the tutor a lot of feedback time, more class discussion in which different evidence entries are analysed to demonstrate the difference between deep and surface reflection need to be introduced to ensure students understand what is expected of them. The activity needs to be presented clearly as a meaningful and powerful learning tool which is of significant benefit in preparation for employability.
• Encouraging or demanding that students devise action plans in response to areas of weakness, to facilitate taking ownership of learning, is also worthwhile.

In brief – making the case for PebblePad

• The PebblePad Profile Builder is a tool for guided reflection, customisable to any learning situation.
• In using the profile to guide students to reflect upon their skills and competencies at the end of their studies, their graduate attributes were an integral part of the profile.
• The link between reflection upon learning and employability has been vastly demonstrated. The profile has been designed to enhance student employability through reflection.

References:


To view this case study in an electronic format please visit this link:
www.pebblebash.co.uk/2012/pdf/cs26.pdf
Part Two

Student Perspectives
Ruth Barnsley

Creative Expressive Therapies
University of Derby, UK

You can view the PebblePad webfolio of my submission at: http://bit.ly/pb201215. The following is a text version of it.

I first met PebblePad whilst doing a university module called Working Towards the Future. For this I was asked to create a webfolio which contained:

- reflections from the lectures / evidence building of personal research,
- certificates / qualifications,
- Curriculum Vitae (CV) / personal reference,
- Personal Development Plan.

In PebblePad all these different elements could be held together in one place, together with:

- photographs of my artwork,
- links to videos that inspired me,
- my goals for the future,
- a link to my personal blog,
- my certificates,
- my CV.

This worked really well. Storing all my files on PebblePad turned out to be extremely beneficial as I had an issue with my laptop part-way through the module and if the files had just been saved on my laptop I would have had to start again from scratch. The wizard prompts within PebblePad encouraged me to reflect upon the work I was doing, allowing me to gain more knowledge from my learning, and helped my tutors to understand my thought processes better. I think that being able to include all these elements and also personalise my webfolio in terms of the colour schemes, fonts, layouts and adding images helped my tutor to gain a better picture of who I am. I thought this was far more visually effective and created more interest than if it had been just a bog standard essay.

Being able to share my webfolio with both my tutor and with my Educational Support Worker throughout the time in which I was working on it was very helpful as they could give feedback quickly, whereas when I am submitting a normal essay I would have to arrange a meeting to get feedback. The ability to allow different people to access different areas of my work on PebblePad can help me to maintain confidentiality within my work.

As I care about the environment, using PebblePad reduces the amount of paper and ink used and can encourage both individuals and universities to play their part in looking
after our world. On a personal level, it also saves me money not having to print things off or to buy a portfolio which, having a very limited budget as a student, is always a bonus. I can see how using PebblePad can aid people in gaining new IT skills and confidence which could be helpful with future employment.

I have continued to use PebblePad even though the module has ended as I think it is beneficial for me. In the future it will allow me to reach out to potential employers more easily as, due to a medical condition (I have Myalgic Encephalomyelitis), I find it difficult to travel to drop off my CV / portfolio, whereas with PebblePad I can do this online. I really believe that PebblePad has encouraged me to find ways of expressing myself that were far better than words alone.

1. Describe one thing that you are able to do in PebblePad that you were unable to do in other tools that you had access to?

Files can be linked together from one central piece of evidence and access to the links can be individually set for different users; this enables you to give people access to just the files that are relevant to them whilst keeping them all linked for yourself.

2. If you had to encourage other students to start using PebblePad, how would you ‘sell’ it to them?

I have already been involved in ‘selling’ PebblePad to other students. I encouraged them to have a go by telling them (1) that no matter what IT skills you have you will be able to use it, as everybody can work at different levels within the software, and (2) that its flexibility means you can easily personalise your account to give it a distinctive flavour. I was later told that this approach helped to take the fear away and also made it sound more appealing.

3. What advice would you offer to lecturers (or course designers) thinking of using PebblePad?

I would advise lecturers / course designers who are thinking of using PebblePad for course work, to offer hands-on sessions so that students can learn to use it and gain confidence before having to complete their assignments on it. Though I personally found PebblePad easy to access alone, I know from experience that other students were more wary. Giving students practical hands-on sessions and using peer support (rather than just using a lecture style teaching approach) should help them to quickly access PebblePad’s full capabilities. I personally found it beneficial when my lecturer created several separate webfolios for different areas of work and linked them together using a main webfolio; this template was given to all students to use to submit their coursework. I would strongly encourage other lecturers to adopt this approach as it (1) helps students keep their work organised, and (2) breaks it into bite size chunks which should aid the creative process. Finally, a quick reference guide is usually much appreciated.

To view this case study in an electronic format please visit this link:
www.pebblebash.co.uk/2012/pdf/scs01.pdf
I was first introduced to PebblePad as an electronic notebook for recording experimental data during undergraduate laboratory classes. The project leaders wanted to emphasise that the eNotebook was to stimulate reflection and imagination and not just serve as a repository of data files. I was recruited as a graphic designer to create a fun, but academically accurate, branding for each course.

The slick, clean appearance of webfolios made it easy for me to design custom banners which not only add colour and interest, but also give a sense of identity to each course and session.

*Fig 01:* Distinctive characters associated with each unit of study promotes a sense of identity and engages student interest in practical classes.

Different units of study are represented by unique, immediately identifiable characters. They engage in activities related to the key concepts in each practical session. Students’ curiosity is aroused and this leads to increased engagement both before and after class.

In addition to the fun characters, professional themes were also designed to serve as backgrounds. Since students have access to the individual components of each banner, they can customise the appearance of their eportfolios whilst remaining in theme.

*Fig 02:* Students can adapt the banner to their own preferences, whether it be colourful and fun or professional and minimal.

As a tutor, my role was to restructure the information in existing paper lab manuals and develop a framework for the eNotebook. Microbiology is a visual discipline (e.g., growth
on plates, microscope slides, etc) and the incorporation of images rather than stylised subjective interpretations changes the way in which we teach.

Fig 03: Example of actual lab results

As a postgraduate student I have often been frustrated by the classic paper notebook. My project consists of several concurrently running sub-projects, each involving different techniques and overlapping schedules. Chronological recording of these experiments in a paper book results in fragmentation of experimental themes. These days, results in my research field are almost entirely captured electronically – images, spreadsheets, data sets, etc. Paper notebooks have become inappropriate for storing these data.

Fig 04: Navigating my paper laboratory notebook

By using PebblePad, I have the freedom to organise experiments and data in a way that makes sense to me. This makes it easier to reflect on the outcomes and the approaches and plan for follow-up experiments. The iPhone app is also extremely useful for making notes on the go!

PebblePad also allows me to share my experimental methods (including observations and modifications) with my supervisor and other post-graduate colleagues. Methods are shared using a “Protocol Hub” which is especially useful for new lab members. Issues are posted as comments, and colleagues offer advice or sympathy, thus building the corporate memory of the lab.
I now have a record of the experimental and trouble-shooting skills learnt through-out my PhD. And, while paper books are kept by the University, they cannot take my eportfolio!

As more postgraduate students engage with PebblePad as tutors, they will, like me, adopt it for their own research. Whilst my supervisor can see the benefit of being able to check my notebook as he sips cocktails on Bondi Beach (!), I hope that the use of PebblePad becomes widespread across my entire field to further facilitate research collaborations.

1. Describe one thing that you are able to do in PebblePad that you were unable to do in other tools that you had access to?

By virtue of storage in an online space, PebblePad provides easy access to a safe and permanent record of my postgraduate research and achievements. This is a resource I can easily share with students, advisors and collaborators as well as future employers.

2. If you had to encourage other students to start using PebblePad, how would you ‘sell’ it to them?

Through PebblePad, each student has the ability to organise information in a fashion that makes sense to the individual, rather than forcing students to conform to a pre-determined mould. Your learning space as a student is uniquely yours and there is a sense of ownership and achievement to that!
3. What advice would you offer to lecturers (or course designers) thinking of using PebblePad?

PebblePad represents an excellent space for students to reflect on and further their understanding of concepts introduced in class with the added benefit of increasing engagement between student and educator - definitely something to be provided for and encouraged by lecturers or course designers!

To view this case study in an electronic format please visit this link:
www.pebblebash.co.uk/2012/pdf/scs02.pdf
Rajan Claire

Business Management  
*University of Wolverhampton, UK*

My name is Rajan Claire. I am a first year student studying my Business Management degree at the University of Wolverhampton. I used PebblePad for the first time in ‘Learning for Business Success’ which is a year long module based on personal development planning and improving study and employability skills. The assessments included essays and blogs, and using evidence to underpin the content in these.

PebblePad was useful for me to complete and submit work conveniently. I can submit work without having to hand it in personally and this saves time and money compared to the old fashioned way of personally submitting it to the Student Office.

My tutors regularly checked work and by doing this I was able to improve on individual folders and get specific feedback. Using blogs meant my tutor could see when I had made a reflection and could give me feedback directly on my work. This way of obtaining feedback was a big improvement. Instead of checking emails I was able to just look at PebblePad and make changes, instead of jumping from an email to a word document and back.

PebblePad was a challenge for the first 15 minutes, in terms of what tools to use. But I actually worked out how to use this very quickly and it was easy to use throughout this module. Because of this I didn’t really face any problems.

**Advice for future students;**

Ask a tutor if you need help regarding PebblePad and don’t let a problem worsen. Use PebblePad as way to interact with tutors. Getting your work checked regularly and making improvements will help you to get your desired grades.

1. **Describe one thing that you are able to do in PebblePad that you were unable to do in other tools that you had access to?**

   Overall, the thing which I feel is unique and made my work methodical is the ability to link work, by using a hyperlink tool. This allowed me to connect my work and folders together systematically, something I’m not able to do writing essays. Also submitting work as I go along and spreading the work done.

2. **If you had to encourage other students to start using PebblePad, how would you ‘sell’ it to them?**

   The way I would encourage students to use PebblePad is for them to write about a hobby or experience and write in a journal or blog, with linked pictures. Then write an
essay on the experience, including suggestions for next time. This will encourage them to write about an active, more physical experience and attempt PebblePad at the same time.

3. What advice would you offer to lecturers (or course designers) thinking of using PebblePad?

I would encourage lecturers to think about using PebblePad instead of conventional forms of assignments. It is easy to use but challenges students.

To view this case study in an electronic format please visit this link:
www.pebblebash.co.uk/2012/pdf/scs03.pdf
Lizzie MacKay

BSc(Hons) Midwifery
*University of Wolverhampton, UK*

When I first started at University I was unaware of what an eportfolio was and what it offered to me as a learner. Learning to navigate a new type of system was a daunting prospect. An enthusiastic lecturer launched the system to my cohort of students, but I was initially confused by both the purpose of PebblePad and the navigation and operation of the system. However, learning to use PebblePad was not hard. I particularly like the adaptability and personalisation of the system.

The first benefit that I quickly grasped was the ability to save work in PebblePad and to access this from other computers and locations. It became a storage device for both assignments that I was working on and information that I wished to access at a later date.

My university tutor has set up several Blogs for students to use that act as a useful way of communication between both students and staff in a secure manor. Health education must support confidentiality; it is very useful to have a secure place to discuss experiences that is not searchable by the general public. Students and staff can share experiences, whilst maintaining confidentiality, to further their personal development in a safe respectful manner that can act to build up a useful resource for future students.

During my three-year degree course I have been able to share and collaborate on work in a group setting, enabling this to happen at a convenient time rather than all having to be available at the same time and location. I have been able to share my assignments with mentors and other external people for feedback and study skill support. Where this has worked it has saved on printing and allowed for mentors to browse my work at their leisure.

**Issues encountered**

There have been a few problems with sharing work with some external users who struggle to log into and navigate the system.

The spell check is not very easy to use and navigating down the page is also a problem when accessing PebblePad using different operating systems.

1. **Describe one thing that you are able to do in PebblePad that you were unable to do in other tools that you had access to?**

I have found PebblePad to be a great way to display my work in a variety of ways. The use of media enhances work and webfolios give ease of navigation for the reader. Submission of work via PebblePad has been invaluable during my studies. I currently
travel 1hr and 45 minutes to get to the university. If I had to travel in to submit work this would cost me both in time and money for travel expenses. The use of electronic submission also has a positive environmental impact. Not all of our modules currently have exclusive electronic submission but I hope that the university will adopt this in the future.

2. If you had to encourage other students to start using PebblePad, how would you ‘sell’ it to them?

PebblePad is available for you to access from multiple locations and through multiple devices. It can be used as a storage device for your work, which can be displayed via multiple options. Webfolios can be a good way to display assignments with a large number of appendices allowing illustration to work and easy navigation by the reader. Media can be included on pages and can incorporate both pictures and videos with ease. Work can be shared with external users as well as internal users allowing collaboration for group work and feedback from mentors and study skill support. PebblePad can be used for submission of work having both a positive environmental, financial and timesaving impact. Submission times are also beneficial as the gateway can close at 12pm – a university registry would struggle to allow such late submission.

3. What advice would you offer to lecturers (or course designers) thinking of using PebblePad?"

This is a very beneficial tool for students of all ages. The area of collaborative work can be expanded upon to enable a greater depth of study around a topic. Collaborative group work could be very useful for revising for exams. Electronic submission benefits students and the environment and provides centralised receipts of work received.

To view this case study in an electronic format please visit this link: www.pebblebash.co.uk/2012/pdf/scs04.pdf
PebblePad, although supplied by the university, is my private learning space that provides an environment where I can create, manage and record my learning. My PebblePad learning space embraces many aspects of my education including informal knowledge and skills acquired outside formal course requirements. In my course PebblePad is not used for assessment but I routinely enter its realm to plan, record, question and reflect upon content and ideas. I value the privacy that is offered by PebblePad whilst appreciating the freedom and ability to share work.

Within PebblePad I have numerous ‘working assets’ that provide an ongoing record of my formal and informal learning. Later these assets provide a rich resource for creating published items such as webfolios. Since using PebblePad I have developed a better understanding of how I learn through recording and reflecting upon my learning process. As I am not restricted by assessment requirements I have the freedom to choose the assets that best suit my needs throughout the semester. In the past my study has been disorganised but PebblePad has given me tools such as action plans and reflective thoughts to guide me towards improving the way I organise my study. PebblePad gives me the freedom to work in a way that suits both my creativity and a learning style that evolves in a non-linear way.

Recently I applied for a position as a zoo education officer, a role which would combine my love of education and passion for animals. Stored within PebblePad I have assets that evidence my teaching career, veterinary nursing studies, wildlife care and community activities. I used these assets to create a presentation webfolio that highlighted what I would bring to the position. Although no provision was made for an eportfolio within the application, I placed a link in the covering letter: http://bit.ly/pb201218.

Whilst re-reading my stored reflections and activity logs I realised the extent and range of knowledge and experience that I had acquired within these fields. For a person who struggles with confidence in her own abilities, this was a revelation that may yet remain undiscovered without PebblePad. Since using PebblePad I have achieved higher marks than ever before in my studies. I believe that this is because it is my private learning space that I choose how and when to use. PebblePad gives me the freedom to be able to plan, learn and reflect upon the variety of my experiences in an individual way and find connections that help me to produce better assessment submissions.

In 2013 I will complete my Master of Education research project. My PebblePad will be used to plan, document and tell the story of my research. I have not yet decided upon my strategy but it will include an action plan, a blog and reflective thoughts. I dream of completing a PhD; perhaps autoethnographic research on using PebblePad to research
plan and present a PhD? I must go and create a ‘Thought Asset’ in my PebblePad mobile application to save with my other ideas for future research.

1. **Describe one thing that you are able to do in PebblePad that you were unable to do in other tools that you had access to?**

I am able to use scaffolds such as reflective thoughts when I need some help to get my thoughts or other information recorded but not yet polished. This gives me the chance to record drafts with an outline to guide my thinking, know exactly where I have filed it, and return later to edit and share if I want to, or keep private the thoughts and ideas that I am not yet ready to share.

2. **If you had to encourage other students to start using PebblePad, how would you ‘sell’ it to them?**

Go into PebblePad and ‘play’ – set up the first page and layout the way you want it (mine is bright pink and purple). Create an asset, e.g. plan a shopping trip or a day out with an action plan. Use a reflective thought to reflect on the past week or a recent big event. Create a webfolio for your dog, cat or a hobby by first collecting photos and creating assets to build it with. Take the time to play and explore without the pressure of an assessment. When you are ready choose one aspect of your study, create an action plan and follow it through with another asset. Build up your knowledge slowly – use it for yourself and not just for assessments.

3. **What advice would you offer to lecturers (or course designers) thinking of using PebblePad?**

Be a PebblePad user yourself! Be familiar with the tool and its applications and be willing to share the way you use it and some things that you have created. Introduce it at the beginning of a course, take it slowly utilising an asset at a time, and scaffold the tasks initially. Demonstrate to students how individual assets can come together to create a webfolio of their learning before asking them to complete a webfolio themselves.

Encourage the use of the gateway for sharing of assets and encourage students to start a dialogue about each other's ideas. Don’t miss the collaboration and sharing potential because it is being lost in assessment.

Take the chance to see assessment as ongoing; encourage students to share assessments with you as they progress, and offer support and encouragement or intervention if needed. See using PebblePad as a way to incorporate ongoing real support, not just as a way to receive ‘live or die’ end of semester course requirements.

To view this case study in an electronic format please visit this link: www.pebblebash.co.uk/2012/pdf/scs05.pdf
# Index

## A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic skills</th>
<th>13-14</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accreditation</td>
<td>62, 74, 111-112</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## B

| Barnsley, Ruth | 143 |
| Bell, Madeleine | 111 |
| Benson, Jeremy | 3 |
| Blackboard | 66, 69, 89, 93, 102-104, 106 |
| Blended Learning | 14, 16, 41, 78, 83-85, 88, 127, 131 |
| Blog | 14, 22, 34, 48, 56-58, 78-80, 97, 116, 118, 121, 129, 143, 149, 153 |
| BLPAS | 83-84 |
| Bracegirdle, Luke | 89 |

## C

| Cardew, Chris | 9 |
| Challen, Rachel | 13 |
| Charles Sturt University | 123, 153 |
| Chew, Yi Vee | 145 |
| Chmielewski, Robert | 18 |
| Claire, Rajan | 149 |
| Collaborative | 20, 41-42, 51-52, 55, 58, 78, 80, 82, 97-98, 117, 152 |
| Commenting | 6, 48, 121 |
| Cost Saving | 115 |
| CPD | 3, 46, 61, 64, 78, 89, 95, 107, 127, 132 |
| CV | 10, 23, 85, 87, 102, 113, 129-130, 143-144 |

## D

| Dayandanda, Asanka | 24 |
| Denyer, Gareth | 61 |
| Diagnostic Skills | 26 |
| Digital Literacy | 13, 16 |
| Distance Learning | 33, 56, 59, 78, 81 |
| DLHE | 9 |
| Dunbar-Hall, Peter | 111 |
| Duncan-Pitt, Linsey | 32 |
E

e-Assessment  13, 17-18, 24, 26, 32, 34-35, 41, 44-45, 56, 59-60, 78, 83, 87, 100, 115, 120-121
Employability  3, 8-12, 18, 22, 61, 64, 70, 72-75, 88, 100, 115, 127, 131-133, 137-138
Environmental Impact  18, 115
Evaluation  43-44, 85, 97, 105, 111-112, 117, 127-128, 130
e-Workbooks  24-31

F

Facebook  23
Farmer, Robert  127
Feedback  28-30, 69, 130
Form Builder  19, 21

G

Gamble, Mark  37
Graduate Attributes  13, 16, 18, 22-23, 51, 61, 64, 70, 133-135, 138
Graham, Deena  41
Gysbers, Vanessa  61

H

Hacking, Elisabeth Barratt  46
Haddad, Alissa  123
Haigh, Jackie  51
Hampton, Glynis  56
Hampton, Paul  56
Hancock, Dale  61
Health Care  24, 52-53
Higher Education Funding Council for England  39
Higher Education Small Development Projects Fund  6
Higher Education Statistics Agency  39
Helm-Alabaster, Alice  3
Holmes, Debra  32
Home, David  65
Howard, Andy  70
Howell, Lorraine  13
Hughes, Julie  78
Induction Standards 49
iPhone 146
Johnston, Jill 61
Jones, Geraldine 46
Kant, Sashi 61
Kanuga, Ingrid 83
Keele University 89, 91
Leadership Foundation 6
Lifelong Learning 8, 22, 49, 130
MacKay, Lizzie 151
Maddock, Katie 89
Managing eAssessment 16
Managing Organisational Process 3, 8, 37, 115
Martin, Susan 46
McKeown, Lisa 13
Methodology 15, 46, 66, 74-76, 84
Middlesex University 24, 28, 31
Midwifery 26, 41, 51, 151
Newsome, Tim 61
NHS 51, 95, 108, 115
NQTs 46
Nursing 18, 20-21, 23, 27, 32, 41, 45, 51, 53, 118, 153
Outcome 90, 103, 134-136
Owen, Gwyn 95
Paterson, Nina 95
PDP 65, 70, 90
Pedagogy 56
Performance Management 49
Personal Learning Space 8, 59, 102
PGCE 46
Planning 5-8, 15, 34, 38-39, 42, 53-54, 56, 59, 65, 70, 90, 92, 101, 104, 149
Poot, Alison III, IV, X, 45, V
Porcaro, Pauline 100
Post Graduate Diploma 41
Professional Development 3, 5, 46, 61, 64, 78, 89, 95, 107, 127, 132, VI, V
Professional Practice 3, 13, 18, 24, 46, 51, 61, 65, 78, 83, 89, 95, 100, 107, 111, 115, 120, 127
Profiles 55, 129, 133, 137, VII
Purnell, Emma 13, 56

Q
Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education 39, 45, 90

R
Reed, Karen 107
Retention 13, 16, 24, 100
Rhoades, Gavin 78
RMIT University 100
Rowley, Jennifer 111
Ruston, Sarah 3
Ryder, Agi 24

S
Salem, Liz 107
Sambrook, Andi 115
Sembi, Pritpal Singh 120
Siddons, Leonie 127
Stewart, Sandra 153
Stewart, Sandra J 123
Stuart, Kim 127
Student Experience 10, 62, 83, 117, 126-127
Student Satisfaction 24, 100, 115, 123, 125
Summative Assessment 13, 24, 120
Sutherland, Shane 102, 106
Swansea University 9
T
Taylor, John 111
Taylor, Judie 65
The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy 95
The Society of Chiropodists and Podiatrists 107
The University of Northampton 127
The University of West London 133
The University of Wolverhampton 13
Transition 13, 28, 46-47, 55, 67, 70, 75, 100-101, 103-106, 128-130

U
Undergraduate 19, 32, 51, 53, 63, 70, 76, 89, 91, 127, 130, 145
University of Bath 46
University of Bedfordshire 37-38, 40
University of Bradford 51
University of Cumbria 3, 7
University of Derby 65, 143
University of Edinburgh 18-19, 22
University of Surrey 115, 118
University of Sussex 70
University of Sydney 61, 111, 145
University of West London 41, 83, 133

V
VLE 18, 25, 32

W
Wade, Eti 133
Webber, Peter 46
Website 74, 97, 107, 124
Workshop 34, 39, 46-47, 53
Weeks, Ruth 61

Y
YouTube 58