

ePortfolios as Tools for Work Placement and Graduate Employability

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Aims

This paper provides a brief background to the role of the ePortfolio tool within the MTU TEL Ecosystem, reports feedback from a pilot based on the use of the ePortfolio to support work placement and outlines potential implications for the use of the ePortfolio tool to support graduate employability.

Findings

- Feedback from students was mixed, with:
 - 37.5% of students identifying their overall experience of using the ePortfolio system for work placement as Very Good.
 - 62.5% identifying their experience as unsure.
- The ease of use and the availability of the ePortfolio system scored highly among students.
 - But the tools provided by the ePortfolio for supporting placement scored less well.
- Qualitative feedback primarily identified that the freedom and sustainability of the system were strong features.
 - But a lack of clarity in the user interface and some extraneous features were weaker features.
- Teacher Feedback was positive with respect to the freedom the ePortfolio offered students in better representing evidence of learning.
 - Issues identified included associated technical issues

Impact

- As outlined by Lambert & Corrin (2007), ePortfolio use can be implemented through a variety of assessment approaches - ranging from academic integrated and unpromoted models.
 - An ePortfolio can also be student-driven or self-managed and can be formative and/ or summative.
- This range of potential approaches offers great variety to the stakeholders involved and can be adapted to suit a variety of requirements.
- Outcomes for this process provides students with a means of developing a substantial body of evidence of learning and opportunities for critical reflection on same within the one space
- But - as outlined by Juznic & Pymm (2010) can ultimately provide “students with more confidence when seeking employment and provides employers with more information as to the range of the applicants’ knowledge and experience – it is a win-win situation for both parties”.

Visuals

The screenshot shows a user profile for 'Jean Test' on the MTU ePortfolio system. The profile includes a navigation menu with 'PROFILE', 'PORTFOLIO', and 'CONNECTIONS'. The 'Overview' section displays the user's education at the Cork Institute of Technology and their work experience as a multimedia developer at DEIS, CIT, with 4 projects, 32 skills, and 0 connections. The 'Introduction' section contains two paragraphs of text describing the user's background and experience.

References

- Lambert, M. S., & Corrin, M. L. (2007). From optional to mandatory to assessed: updating models of university student ePortfolio use. In A conference for university teachers (p. 75).
- Juznic, P., & Pymm, B. (2010). Students on placement: building their e-portfolio from practical experience. In World Library and Information Congress: 76 Th IFLA General Conference and Assembly.