**Title**

**Using Learning and Teaching e-Portfolios to Promote Professional Practice**

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**Abstract**

A teaching and learning e-portfolio facilitates practitioners in the integration of the theory and practice of learning and teaching within showcase exemplars of their best practice. It supports structured reflective critical practices as a tool for reflective pedagogy.

Having developed a level 9 module worth 10 E.C.T.S. credits in order to facilitate the development of learning and teaching e-Portfolios, a pilot delivery of the module was conducted in the academic years 2014- 2015 and 2015-2016, with the first cohort of participants graduating in summer 2016. A student-led learning process was facilitated which transformed the portfolio beyond an initial artefact into an evolving, self-driven tool of critical reflection with personal philosophy aligned to pedagogy in every-day teaching practice.

The module exemplifies a student-led learning experience. It uses a flipped classroom approach and active learning methodologies to ensure that all practitioners reach a level of critical reflection and metacognition most suited to their pedagogical approach. The module is delivered in two parts over one semester.

A ‘Day One Training’ process introduces the e-portfolio rationale and contents, explores teaching theorists, and follows with a hands-on constructivist web building workshop. Students are given guidance as to the structure of the e-portfolio artefact and have access to examples of completed e-portfolios and philosophy statements, as would be expected in a student-centred, social constructivist pedagogical approach.

Students are encouraged to engage in reflective practice in their own time by way of visualisation, journaling, blogging or video reflections, for example, using integrated computer technologies (I.C.T.), websites and various digital tools. Drop-in sessions are facilitated to trouble-shoot any issues that might arise and help encourage completion of the artefact. Over the semester this platform is populated with samples of best teaching and learning work and assessments utilised.

A ‘Day Two Assessment’ process is conducted at the end of the semester. Participants showcase their e-portfolio, by means of a peer presentation and a question and answer session. A self, peer and tutor assessment process is conducted, using an e-portfolio rubric assessment tool specifically designed to assess the module learning outcomes. A pass or incomplete grade is established. Where incomplete, support is provided to complete the e-Portfolio within one academic year.

To date, this student-led learning experience has empowered two practitioner learners (one from each of the 2015 and 2016 cohorts) to take on the respective roles of module leader and facilitator in 2016-2017. Thus the learner has become the learned, an outcome associated with excellence in student-led learning pedagogical practices.

The student-led learning experience has been enhanced by peer-mentoring to make this happen. Moreover, the module team has evolved as an interdisciplinary, interdepartmental and intercampus cohort of experienced practitioners, reflective of the diversity of various campuses and teaching skills mix available at the Institute, within an ever-expanding ‘community of practice’.

A senior management member likened the staff e-portfolios to ‘a CPD tool (with) the potential to promote the activities of staff to external stakeholders’, where e-portfolios showcase graduate and programme deliverables nationally and internationally.

From a wider European perspective, e-Portfolios have been a ‘central element in some national learning policies’ (Ravet, 2009, p4). They can be used to deepen ‘mutual understanding and respect among citizens in Europe’ (Bruen, Pechenart, & Crosbie, 2010, p177).

**References**

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Ravet, S. (2009). ePortfolio a European Perspective. Retrieved from https://formationdistance2.files.wordpress.com/2009/10/eportfolio-in-europe-v05.pdf