Review of Day 1

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What am I doing here?

- Formative input (for me too)
- Capturing a snapshot of work-in-progress
e.g. early outline feedback from ‘audit’
- Observing the exploration phase still ongoing and still open – please feed into
  - building dialogue across the sector
  - identifying others who need to be involved – especially students
Yesterday – a great range of inputs

- A survey of ePF activities from Rob
- Philosophical challenges from Darren
- Explication of the Graduation Statement from Grant
- Interactive voting on audit questions led by project team members
- Wendy’s cookery-inspired intro to the Maturity Model concept which the project will be developing
- New perspectives from the Netherlands
My bedtime reading

- Thank you for your cards yesterday
  - Expressing views on core issues and offering suggestions
  - Providing feedback to the project team and responses to speakers

And especially

- Articulating a wide range of practical questions that are on your minds – many in response to Rob’s talk
What’s coming up

I think we have a tendency to talk about ePF too much in the singular, as if it is single entity, monolithic.

Also large, new and daunting.
A major challenge, then, to which we seek ‘The Solution’ (singular).

For my alternative view --
- Some background
- Comments on yesterday which stress complexities which may make us feel worse
- Suggestions which may help us feel better
Background: How did I get into ePFs?

- A short story – which starts in a subject department and begins sadly …
- Modularisation of UK degree structures
- Teaching quality assurance
- UK and EU funding for multi-institutional projects, ongoing as ePFs have risen up political agendas – ePortfolio Centre
- ePFs for Integrative Learning – several pilots currently, for second generation provision at the University of Nottingham
ePF implementations sit within complex institutional contexts

- The University’s mission and strategic priorities
- Its particular student mix (many cards foreground the plurality and diversity of types of students across HE)
- Teaching being bound up with some of the admin of student learning
- Every part of the University seeming to have a potential interest
- An integrated IT strategy across all institutional functions which makes local e-solutions pointless/short-lived
Squaring the circle

- My current strategy is to promote pedagogically-led pilots in institutionally strategic areas
Picking up on a few key themes from yesterday

- Institutionally provided or learner owned ePFs
- Standardised definitions of learning and student-owned definitions
- Is ePortfolio (singular) misleading and do we really want a unitary ePF solution to our implementation challenges?
Learner-owned ePF ↔ institutionally-provided ePF

- Distributed/disaggregated ePFs – Learner-owned ePFs using web services to draw data from plural repositories – universities would be ‘invited in’ to students’ ePFs

- Institutional realities
  - HEIs have ongoing QA responsibilities for students’ learning; + ease and support provided by the ‘all in one place’ single solution …
  - … in tension with many students’ rejection of the institutionally-provided ePF package as impersonal and outdated
Institutional reality: an imagined Darren-Grant dialogue

- Graduate Statement -- Cf Darren’s arguments for student-defined, student-owned learning
- Standardising on a narrow concept of learning? Contextualising the qualification but not the graduate
- Cf writing employment references
- But your cards support standardisation for communication around transition, a prime area of interoperation with other institutions
- Strategic driver: international students – strong support for a standard statement predicated on a traditional, institutional definition of learning – for the immediate benefits it will bring
Not so much ePortfolio, more aspects of ePF-related learning

- Becta research done by Nottingham’s Learning Sciences Research Institute: *Impact of e-Portfolios on Learning*
- UK primary, secondary, FE, HE, adult continuing learning, work-based (junior doctors)
- Research methods: document analysis, online surveys of 172 learners and teachers, interviews
- 8 projects individually contextualised: efficiency of the personal online learning space, nature of organisational culture and role of teachers.
ePF? No
ePF-related learning? Yes

- Most of the institutions selected by Becta for the survey as examples of ePF practice were using IT to support a range of aspects of learning but didn’t call the tools ePFs.
- So the research team coded the data coded for aspects of learning, e.g. engagement, planning, reflection.
Key finding

- Current [UK] practice displays a range of successful e-portfolio learning processes (recording and storing evidence, organising and planning, reflecting, feedback and collaboration, presenting and publishing), improving attainment, engagement and motivation, personalisation, self esteem, creativity
- … supported by a diversity of online tools and repositories
Graphic developed by project leader Elizabeth Hartnell-Young, Nottingham (LSRI) and Melbourne

PURPOSES
- Celebrating learning
- Personal planning
- Transition/entry to courses
- Employment applications
- Professional registration

PROCESSES
- Capturing & storing evidence
- Reflecting
- Giving feedback
- Collaborating
- Presenting to an audience

Repository

E-portfolios to present for different purposes

Tools to support processes

Spaces (local or remote) to store resources and an archive of evidence
An enabling approach to implementation

- No need to swallow the ePF challenge whole
  - Start where the pedagogic need is
  - Use tools which are to hand
- Cf NL video yesterday: Marij urged us to engage not with ‘A portfolio, but portfolio concept’
NL advances plural ePF scenarios

- Project looking at ePF implementations across 7 HEIs
- Resulted in several distinct scenarios
- Learning purposes for ePFs in academic universities and vocational ones map *partially* and *differently* against the spectrum of ePF functions
- In each case ask: what kind of scenario do we have?
A contributor wrote this Utopian suggestion on a card yesterday

‘ePF tool box –
Could we have all the ePF systems collected and modularised? This would permit staff/institutions to integrate the modules right for them to adopt a more useful and applicable system for their contexts’

Compare the eFramework international web services initiative (JISC and DEEWR)
Realisation is a few years away still
AeP. project should contribute importantly to its development
ePF learning in HE, for now

- Meanwhile, Good Luck in squaring all the competing demands around the scenarios and solutions you will identify on your own doorsteps in the short term.
- The larger community represented by this symposium provides a rich context for your individual work.
- Some of your cards indicate a wish for this community to carry on – I think we can all see why that’s a very good idea.