Embedding E-portfolios in a Law Program
Professor Vicki Waye
• In 2008 UniSA commenced the first year of a new law program
• School sought to make career management a focus of the curriculum & to create an environment that supported student learning
• Therefore decided to embed e-portfolios across the new law program
Aims & Drivers of Project

• Desire to create an integrated process of personalized, professional development
• Desire to provide opportunities to assimilate experience, feedback, reflection & self evaluation
• Desire to bridge dichotomy between legal doctrine and legal practice
Aims & Drivers of the Project

- Regardless of graduate career destination (eg law or non-law) University & Govt mandate acquisition of graduate attributes/qualities
- Attainment of graduate qualities should be substantiated by evidence of the process and outcomes of student learning – ie through aggregated assessment tasks
Aim to implement a constructivist e-portfolio built around UniSA’s graduate qualities comprised of:

- A digital archive of learner’s work
- A learner centred e-portfolio incorporating reflection on assessment and choice of work
- An institution-centred database to collect assessment data from learning experiences embedded into the curriculum
First Tasks

- Learn about e-portfolio practice
- Find a tool that will fulfil our aims but also fall within our constraints (budget/size of project etc)
  - open source or proprietary??

See [Categories of E-portfolio tools](#)
Policy considerations

- Ownership
- Legal liability for content
- Verification
- Interoperability
- Storage of data
- Link with existing UniSA systems
- Link with assessment
- Scalability
Other issues relevant to choice of tool

- Cost
- Provision of hosting
- Student control of material
- Assessment features
- Social networking features
- Ease of deployment
- User documentation
- Support
- Existing communities of practice
2nd Task

- Program mapping
- Identification of assessment tasks
3rd Task

- Creation of scaffolding material
- Introducing students to e-portfolios & career skills management
4th Task

- Run assessments and create opportunities for reflection in the e-portfolio
- Assessments:
  1. Contracts A – simple role play negotiation
  2. Contracts B – complex team based negotiation preceded by problem based learning analysis of legal scenario
  3. Linking of exercises through reflection on skill development
Links between social space, personal space & institution

This is the space where work is completed for social or self-determined purposes, e.g., to showcase to family, friends, potential employers.

This is the part of the personal space where work is completed for assessment. Having work assessed & viewed by others does not affect the privacy of the work created for other reasons.

This is the personal and private space belonging to the student where experiences and achievements are recorded.
Lessons Learned
Perceived Benefits

- E-portfolios helped to learn the course concepts and skills in a new way (Q2)
- E-portfolios made me more interested in my work (Q3)
- E-portfolios help me think more about my learning (Q4)
- The e-portfolio helped to see where to improve my professional skills (Q11)
- E-portfolio helped preservation of work / development of understanding (Q12)
- E-portfolios are a good way to show my progress to others (Q14)
- E-portfolios enabled me to show the depth & breadth of my knowledge (Q18)
- E-portfolios enabled me to formulate a personal development plan (Q19)
### Potential Barriers

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<th>Question</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I would NOT use e-portfolios unless required as part of my assessment (Q6)</td>
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<td>PebblePad's appearance and navigation were clear and consistent (Q6)</td>
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<td>The e-portfolio software tool (ie pebblepad) was too limited (Q7)</td>
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<td>The e-portfolio tool (ie pebblepad) was easy to access (Q8)</td>
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<td>The materials provided on career skills development were informative (Q9)</td>
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<td>Materials on reflective practice helped to use of the e-portfolio (Q10)</td>
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<td>E-portfolios have taken up too much of my out of class time (Q13)</td>
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<td>The feedback on e-portfolio helped to identify strength and weakness (Q15)</td>
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<td>The feedback helped to better plan to improve my learning (Q16)</td>
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<td>The feedback on my e-portfolio was too limited (Q17)</td>
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<td>More supporting material for effective use of e-portfolios is required (Q20)</td>
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Key findings

- E-portfolios seen as assessment task rather than a tool for developing & recording graduate qualities
- Students sceptical about employer acceptance
- More supporting material required
- Greater learning time devoted to development of reflective skills – use MOSEP workshops
Create
Edit
Review

Ability
Achievement
Action Plan
Experience
Meeting
Thought
Activity
CV
Blog
WebFolio
Proforma
Profile

Pp ePortfolio Asset Store

Scans
Files
Movies
Sounds
Transcript

Shared
Published
Exported
Printed
Moving Forward

• Embedding e-portfolio assessment in level 2 courses
• Creation of capstone experience – incorporating legal clinics, reflection on work experience, internship, working with barristers, working with multimedia
Building Communities of Practice

- Rolling out e-portfolios to other disciplines in UniSA
- Establishing Wikis, websites, online tutorial assistance
- Joining the Pebblepad users group with RMIT
- Working with RMIT with e-portfolios and Turnitin
Conclusion

• Main challenge is to ensure stakeholder (both student and future employer) confidence in both the technology and the pedagogy