



EPORTFOLIOS

An e-portfolio is an electronic collection of carefully selected information that serves as evidence of the owner's learning journey, competencies etc. These portfolios can be created through different platforms, commercial tools or open source applications. E-portfolios created on the Mahara platform in SUNLearn cannot be accessed by persons outside of the university, thus depending on the purpose of the e-portfolio you may need to use a different platform.

Here are some things to consider when contemplating the use of e-portfolios in teaching and learning.

AFFORDANCES

- E-portfolios can have different purposes:
 - Working portfolios: These serve the purpose of supporting students in their planning, organisation and development of learning.
 - Assessment portfolios: This can be used specifically to assess certain learning outcomes that is not suited to be assessed through traditional means.
 - Presentation/showcase portfolios: This is a professional development type portfolio that showcase a student's competencies, skills and academic achievements.
 - Hybrid portfolios: More often than not portfolios will serve more than one of the purposes described above.
- Students can create individual, personalised e-portfolios to reflect on a course, module or other learning experience.
- It can assist students in planning their own academic pathways as they come to comprehend what they know and are able to do and what they still need to learn.
- It can build students' personal and academic identities as they complete multifaceted projects and reflect on their capabilities and development.
- It can support the integration of learning when students link learning across courses and time.
- Graduating students can use their e-portfolios as part of their CV's when applying for jobs.
- It provides an opportunity for learning which can serve both a formative and/or summative assessment purpose.
- It can be focused on developing self-assessment skills in which students judge the quality of their work using criteria similar to what professionals would use.



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- E-portfolios created through commercial tools or open source applications can be maintained and further used by students after completion of a module or program, which supports lifelong learning.
- It is easy to share, store or update e-portfolios
- Multimedia support: Students can add videos and images, or links to relevant multimedia resources to their e-portfolios.
- E-portfolios can be an integral part of a module or it can only be used for a specific section.
- It can be used for both large and small class sizes.

CHALLENGES

- Grading of e-portfolios can be quite time consuming however, making use of rubrics and peer assessment or tutors can greatly ease the burden, while serving as an additional learning opportunity for these students.
- Students struggle to provide constructive feedback to their peers.
- There is a slight learning curve to using the Mahara platform on SUNLearn, however it is supported by Stellenbosch University and training can be provided where necessary.
- E-portfolios lack standardisation
- E-portfolios are not anonymous.
- It is important to choose the correct platform to suit the purpose of the portfolio.
- Students struggle to write reflectively and to identify the appropriate artefacts to include in their portfolios.