



Student experiences of ePortfolios within MTU



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Introduction and Context

- ▶ Challenge of definition – a variety of forms and function
- ▶ Irish survey (Farrell et al. 2021 p.103) “assessment, placement and to collect evidence of graduate attributes”
- ▶ Nagle, Farrelly and O’Connell (2019) - academic use indicates various technologies used as portfolios or de facto portfolios.
- ▶ Slow pace of ePortfolio adoption within the Irish Education sector could be “due to three factors: a lack of government policy drivers; no distinct Irish ePortfolio community; and a scarcity of funding” (Farrell, 2018, p.154).

Methodology

- ▶ Adopted an exploratory case study design in a single HEI.
- ▶ Incorporated a mixed-methods approach to data collection involving an online survey followed by semi-structured interviews.
- ▶ Interviews were carried out remotely by the primary researcher using an institutional MS Teams account.
- ▶ Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) of qualitative data from the semi-structured interviews and the open-ended questions from the survey

Results

Extent to which the ePortfolio helped students with their studies (n=72)

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Constructing an ePortfolio helped/helps me to reflect on my learning.	4%	16%	26%	41%	12%
Allowed/Allows me to evaluate and reflect on my learning processes	4%	15%	33%	34%	14%
Allowed/Allows me to keep track of learning experiences and be able to reflect on any weak areas	7%	16%	30%	38%	7%

Results (ii)

Perceived challenges to creating ePortfolios (non-technology) n=72

Challenges to use	% Reported
Lack of time to engage in ePortfolio development	44%
Lack of feedback from lecturers	42%
Not sure of the purpose of the ePortfolio	39%
Lack of confidence in writing reflectively	33%
Not relevant to my studies	26%
Lack of time to attend training	26%
Lack of student support	20%

Results (iii)

Hours students spend updating the ePortfolio in an average month (n=72)

Hours per month	% Reported
Indeterminate/Not Specified	15%
2 and below	21%
2.5 to 6	21%
6.5 to 12	18%
14 to 30	14%
30+	11%

Results (iv)

Student ratings of digital literacy skills before and after using and creating an ePortfolio (n=72)

		1	2	3	4	5
Creating and editing documents (Word doc, PDF, text files etc.)	Before	0%	14%	27%	36%	23%
	After	4%	6%	14%	43%	34%
Creating and editing video files	Before	25%	32%	24%	18%	3%
	After	8%	23%	32%	30%	7%
Creating and editing audio files	Before	30%	40%	18%	11%	1%
	After	16.4%	30.1%	27.4%	21.9%	4.1%
Interacting with social networking tools (Facebook, Instagram etc.)	Before	4%	10%	22%	25%	40%
	After	6%	7%	15%	30%	43%
Creating and editing an ePortfolio	Before	32%	16%	26%	25%	1%
	After	7%	15%	22%	43%	14%
Awareness of digital well-being e.g. privacy, security.	Before	12%	15%	27%	33%	12%
	After	11%	14%	21%	34%	21%
Creating and editing images	Before	8%	26%	29%	29%	8%
	After	6%	15%	29%	36%	15%

Results (vi)

Students' perspectives ePortfolio supports (n=72)

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I received/receive clear guidance on the purpose for creating my ePortfolio	7%	14%	34%	37%	8%
I received/receive training on how to create and manage my ePortfolio	8%	18%	30%	34%	10%
I received/receive clear guidance on what was/is required in my ePortfolio e.g. which artefacts to include.	4%	12%	25%	47%	12%
The college provided/provides me with sufficient support in the creation/management of my ePortfolio	4%	15%	38%	31%	11%

Results (vii)

Useful supports & resources in creating ePortfolios* (n=72)

Useful supports & Resources	% Reported
Frequent Access to a computer	80%
Internet-based tutorials	79%
Help from peers	85%
Assistance from library	51%
Access to computer services	56%
Accessing model examples	64%
Lecturer feedback	69%

Results (viii)

Likelihood of sharing an ePortfolio with potential employers (n=72)

Likelihood of ePortfolio sharing with an employer	% Reported
Extremely unlikely	32%
Unlikely	22%
Neither unlikely nor unlikely	25%
Likely	15%
Extremely likely	6%

Conclusion

- ▶ **Simply presenting ePortfolios as a self-evident good and hoping that the situation will resolve itself is short-sighted and likely to end in frustration and missed opportunities.**

Publication

- ▶ Journal of Educators Online
- ▶ **'Student experiences of ePortfolios within an Irish University'**

Thank you!