

## Purpose and design of an ePortfolio

Jean Claude Callens, Jan Elen

► **To cite this version:**

Jean Claude Callens, Jan Elen. Purpose and design of an ePortfolio. Michael E. Auer. Conference ICL2007, September 26 -28, 2007, 2007, Villach, Austria. Kassel University Press, 3 p., 2007. <hal-00257151>

**HAL Id: hal-00257151**

**<https://telearn.archives-ouvertes.fr/hal-00257151>**

Submitted on 18 Feb 2008

**HAL** is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.

## Purpose and design of an ePortfolio

*Jean Claude Callens<sup>1</sup>, Jan Elen<sup>2</sup>*

University College, South-West-Flanders; Catholic University of Leuven

**Key words:** *ePortfolio, design of an ePortfolio*

### Abstract:

*The focus of this contribution is the relationship between the purpose to use an ePortfolio and its design. By highlighting the relationship between purposes and design of an ePortfolio, we want to present a framework that gives directives to use an ePortfolio in an educational context. When used for lifelong learning and / or 'assessment for learning', student-ownership and reflection are important characteristics. When used for accreditation (= 'assessment of learning') the use of 'standards' is at least equally important.*

## 1 Introduction

There has been a significant increase in the use of ePortfolio's [1].

Meeus, Van Looy, and Van Petegem [2] note that information stored in a portfolio can be used for varied purposes. The focus of this contribution is the relationship between the purpose to use an ePortfolio and its design: '*Can one type of an ePortfolio serve several purposes?*'

By highlighting the relationship between purposes and design of an ePortfolio, we want to present a framework that gives directives to the use of ePortfolio's in educational contexts. To do this, an literature analysis has been conducted.

## 2 Results

Callens and Elen [3] determine on the basis of a literature analysis, a clear conceptual link between the design of an ePortfolio and the purpose of it.

Design of an ePortfolio? → depends of the purpose		
Assessment of learning	Assessment for learning	Lifelong learning
-The use of standards -(Reflection)	-Reflection -Student-ownership	-Student-ownership -Reflection
Positivist paradigm	Constructivist paradigm	Constructivist paradigm
CS-approach	GT-approach	GT-approach

Fig. 1: purpose and design of an ePortfolio

### 2.1 Student-ownership/the use of standards

When the purpose to use an ePortfolio is life-long learning and/or 'assessment for learning'; 'student ownership' and reflection are often indicated as the most important characteristics. After all, lifelong learning asks for continuation; this implies the idea that students maintain their portfolio after graduation. To do this, students have to be motivated. An important element to motivate students to maintain their ePortfolio after graduation, is to give them

ownership over content (artifacts, reflections,...), purpose (the reason for creating the portfolio) and process (sequence of activities, the evaluation criteria, the rules,...).[4] The literature analysis also revealed that student-ownership is an important characteristic of an ePortfolio when the purpose is 'assessment for learning'.

The results of the research of Tartwijk et al. [5] show that students are often more motivated to 'maintain' their ePortfolio during their study, when they can choose the 'look and feel' of the ePortfolio.

When the ePortfolio is used for accreditation (cf. 'assessment of learning ') the evidence in an ePortfolio has to be checked on validity by using standards [4, 5], and on authenticity of the artifacts (e.g. by using a supervisor). [6]

In addition, Gibson and Barrett [7] distinguish two ePortfolio-systems: 'generic tools' (GT) and 'customized systems approaches' (CS). A CS-approach is more top-down organized and can be related to the purpose 'assessment of learning'. A GT approach, at the other hand, gives more initiative to the student, here the purposes 'lifelong learning' and/or 'assessment for learning' fit very well. In daily practice, many ePortfolios can be characterized as hybrid systems; with characteristics of both ePortfolio-systems. [3]

## 2.2 Reflection

The literature analysis revealed that when the purpose to use an ePortfolio is lifelong learning[8] and/or 'assessment for learning' [9, 10, 11,12,13] reflection is argued to be an important characteristic of an ePortfolio. After all, when we aim at those purposes, students have to be able to determine their needs for further training; therefore reflection on what they have learned can be seen as an important step to do this.

When used for accreditation (= 'assessment of learning') it's more obvious to use a 'show-case portfolio' than a 'reflection portfolio'. [14] However, the importance of reflection in a 'show-case portfolio' depends on the context. When used for AP(e)L (=accreditation of prior experiential learning), we assume that reflection is important when we want to assess the general competence 'critical reflection'. Reflection-assignments, used during an educational programme, seem less important when an ePortfolio is considered as a 'show-case portfolio'. [14] When the show-case portfolio is used for application, Giorgini (Giorgini Fabrizio, ePortfolioconference 26-10-2005) assumes that 'the reflections' stored in an ePortfolio can be useful for HRM and selection/assessment; however the literature analysis revealed no specific evidence or argumentation.

## References:

- [1] Love, T. & Cooper, T., (2003). 'Designing online information systems for portfolio-based assessment, design criteria and heuristics', *Journal of information technology education*, volume 3, Retrieved march 04, 2006, <http://jite.org/documents/Vol3/v3p065-081-127.pdf>.
- [2] Meeus, W., Van Looy, L. & Van Petegem, P. (2005). 'Portfolio: geen container voor alle leren, een Kritische reflectie, *Velon Tijdschrift voor lerarenopleiders*, february 15, edition 1.
- [3] Callens, J.C. & Elen, J. (2007). Doel en vormkenmerken van een ePortfolio... 'un ménage à trois'? *Velon Tijdschrift voor lerarenopleiders*, february 15, edition 1.
- [4] Barrett, H. (2005). *Researching electronic portfolios and learner engagement*. Retrieved february 2, 2005, <http://electronicportfolios.com/reflect/whitepaper.pdf>.
- [5] Tartwijk, J, van Rijswijk, M. & Tuithof, H. (2005). De introductie van een portfolio aan de hand van een analogie. *VELON Tijdschrift voor Lerarenopleiders*, 26(3).
- [6] Barker, K. (2003). *ePortfolio Quality standards, an international development project*. Retrieved december 17, 2004, <http://www.futured.com/pdf/ePortfolio%20Quality%20Discussion%20Paper.pdf>.
- [7] Gibson, D., Barrett, H. (2003). Electronic portfolios: decisions and dilemmas. *Proceedings annual conference of the Society for information Technology and Teacher Education*. Albuquerque, NM.
- [8] Memorandum voor levenslang leren (ongedateerd). *Levenslang & levensbreed leren in Vlaanderen & Europa*. Retrieved october 2, 2006, <http://ppw.kuleuven.be/levenslangleren/memorand.htm>.

- [9] Barrett, H. & Wilkerson, J. (2004). *Conflicting paradigms in electronic portfolio approaches, choosing an electronic portfolio strategy that matches your conceptual framework*. Retrieved december 15, 2004, <http://electronicportfolios.org/systems/paradigms.html>.
- [10] Colyer S. & Howell J. ( 2002). Beyond the shoe box: developing an ePortfolio for leisure Sciences students. *Teaching and learning forum 2002: Focusing on the Student*. Retrieved december 15, 2004, <http://www.ecu.edu.au/conferences/tlf/2002/pub/docs/Colyer.pdf>.
- [11] Dysthe, O. & Engelsen, K. (2004). Portfolios and assessment in teacher education in norway: a theory-based discussion of different models in two sites. *Assessment & evaluation in higher education*, vol. 29, no 2.
- [12] Hewett, S. (2004). Electronic portfolios, improving instructional practices. *Techtrends, volume 48, number 5*.
- [13] Tosh, D. & Werdmuller, B. (2004). *ePortfolios and weblogs:one vision for ePortfolio development*. Retrieved december 15,2004, [http://www.eradc.org/papers/ePortfolio\\_Weblog.pdf](http://www.eradc.org/papers/ePortfolio_Weblog.pdf).
- [14]Tillema, H. (2000). Leren van portfolio's. *VELON Tijdschrift voor Lerarenopleiders*, 21(4), 15-21.

**Author(s):**

[1]Jean Claude Callens  
University College, South-West-Flanders,  
KATHO, Impulscentrum & Expertisecentrum Afstandsleren  
Doorniksesteenweg 145  
B-8500 Kortrijk  
[Jeanclaude.callens@katho.be](mailto:Jeanclaude.callens@katho.be)

[2]Jan Elen, Professor, PHD  
Catholic University of Leuven  
Faculteit Psychologie en Pedagogische wetenschappen,  
Centrum voor Instructiepsychologie en -technologie