

## **ePortfolio development in an online education program**

The research shows examples of promoting the use of ePortfolios for learning and reflective practice in higher education. For example, Parkes, Dredger & Hicks (2013) highlight how the use of ePortfolios has increased due to calls for accountability in learning but also the adaptability to technologies and environments of learners. However, Di Silvestro & Nadir (2021) discuss evidence of the emergence and success of ePortfolios for learners in fields of study but do not consider the impact of the technology used. Slepcevic-Zach & Stock (2018) present a comprehensive study also on the use of ePortfolios and how it supports self-reflection.

Di Silvestro & Nadir (2021) examine in detail the participant numbers (both male and female) and fields of study used for the research and the methods of data collection. While the selection appears to have no relation to a specific gender or field the smaller demographic does not provide enough data to provide evidence on the success of an ePortfolio. Surprisingly, the data collection does not record the results or experience of the technology behind an ePortfolio. Slepcevic-Zach & Stock (2018) highlight that preliminary study results showed that students lacked confidence in the technology used. This could explain perhaps the exclusion or perceived lack of results around technologies. Their research also encompasses a significantly higher number of participants with splits across semesters, male, female and age with consideration to mature students as well as younger students. The results alongside the consideration of the technology give a much clearer insight into the student's reflections of their learning.

In conclusion, the research suggests that ePortfolios are increasing in popularity and use and have been used in traditional technology paths and a wider range of academic learning. The effort to create an ePortfolio, how it works and how visually it represents your content is also valuable in self-reflection and enhancing the learning experience regardless of field. This would support the fact that almost all industries now expect a level of technical acumen. Even if the learner or area of study is not technology focussed, it allows the individuals to record their learning, reflect and improve wider academic online learning.

### **References:**

Di Silvestro, F. and Nadir, H. (2021). The power of ePortfolio development to foster reflective and deeper learning in an online graduate adult education program. *Adult Learning*, 32(4): 154-164.

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Parkes, K.A., Dredger, K.S. and Hicks, D. (2013). ePortfolio as a Measure of Reflective Practice. *International Journal of ePortfolio*, 3(2): 99-115.