

ePortfolio development in an online education program

Many people would assume that the creation and use of an ePortfolio in an online education program would be more applicable in a traditional technology path such as Computer Science or Information Technology. As the name suggests an ePortfolio would be a digital interface and perhaps be built by technically minded people in addition to supporting learning and self-reflection on a technology study path.

Di Silvestro & Nadir (2021) discuss in detail the use of ePortfolios and the benefits in deeper learning and reflective practice. Their research presents evidence of the emergence and success of ePortfolios for learners yet does not discuss specific fields or the technology but how as a tool ePortfolios and their use are becoming more popular.

What is unexpected is the participant base and fields of study used for the research and the data collection methods. For example, one would not normally associate someone studying nursing and radiography using an ePortfolio to record their work or their learning experiences. That is not to say they should not use an ePortfolio. Regarding data collection it is also unexpected that there appears to be no data to support the experience of the technology used to build an ePortfolio. The data collection is still valid though to evidence the learning experience.

It could be said though that a key output in the data collection could have also been the learning experience with the technology itself. If the aim of an ePortfolio is to evidence your learning experience an analysis of the users experience with technology would also be valid. The effort to create an ePortfolio, how it works and how visually it represents your content would also be very valuable in enhancing the learning experience regardless of field. This would support the fact that almost all industries now expect a level of technical acumen.

In conclusion the research suggests that ePortfolios are increasing in popularity and use and not just been used in traditional technology paths but a wider range of academic learning. Even if the learner or area of study is not technology focussed it gives the individuals the opportunity to record their learning, reflect and improves 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.