

3. Portfolio: requirements and general set up

Conditions

1. The general consensus is that portfolios have three usages, often combined into one: assessment, reflection, showcase. For example: assessment (10%), reflection (30%); showcase (60%). In addition to reflect, showcase, and assess, we could distinguish a fourth component: cumulative registration of employability skills, preferably in a graph. This might help to identify weaknesses or underdeveloped areas.
2. A Home page with explanation of the concept of employability skills, the why and how of it, and a link to the different categories. Expectation management: with link to the menu item (next point) overview of competences and indication how these can be achieved.
3. Menu item with attractive display of the different competences and their subsidiary skills sets. Explanatory texts, images, clips, examples, links to free online modules.
4. Menu item with/for courses (mandatory and non-mandatory IBcoM courses)
5. Menu item with/for extracurricular M&C or EUR related activities
6. For 4 and 5: for each course / activity, at least the following components:
 - a) An assess, showcase, and reflect component or option
 - b) A specific, relevant rubric with skills for that course / activity
7. As for 6 b: how to track and trace and build the skills? Students can check boxes (specific skills) from a pre-selected choice (6b), AND/OR this is done automatically for each activity/course. If it isn't done automatically, what incentive do we see to stimulate students to actually keep track of how their employability skills develop? Can we have both options? How are assignments and other course work uploaded in the Portfolio? What is the connection with Canvas? Ideally, the portfolio allows for choice: automatic for some assignments that are (also) uploaded in Canvas; done by students when reflection is called for. When students do the checking of boxes: set a maximum to the number of employability skills that can be checked if students are asked to tick some boxes (to prevent they semi-automatically check all boxes in one go).
8. To encourage use: some assignments are uploaded only here, not in Canvas (for example for courses that actually use a portfolio, or for reflection assignments that are about the portfolio, or even typical showcase and assess assignments).
9. Grading (assessing) in the portfolio then is another requirement for the portfolio.
10. The portfolio is related to the curriculum, but there should be a good sense of student ownership. So: personalization features and flexible components:
11. Flexible components:
 - a) Exchange (65% on average in the last three years; over 90 partner universities)
 - b) Electives, minor with EUR
 - c) Minor with another university
 - d) Extracurricular project case
 - e) Peer-to peer workshops professional skills (organised by students)
 - f) PAC events: state-of-the-art symposia and workshops involving professionals in the field; aimed at sharing current practices and developments
 - g) Coop academy

- h) Honours Programme: BA-2.
- i) Online modules (Moocs)

12. Exportable and/or accessible with a permalink—students who leave the EUR should still have access to it (perhaps for 3 or 5 years after graduation?)
13. Adapted to ESHCC
14. Checks by the system (AI)
15. To be decided: what to do with group assignments and privacy legislation

How the Portfolio will function

In addition to some course-related reflection assignments, there could be 1 or 2 moments every year that students are encouraged to actively engage with their portfolio, for instance during the Christmas break and the summer break (end of term 4 / beginning of term 1). Reflection assignments that are incorporated in courses (see Ch. 2) will help them develop a strategy for improving their skills.

Ownership implies that students are involved in goal setting and reflection; the skills sets we introduce should help them with these decisions. Given the interrelation of many skills, even when classified into seven major competencies, an essential characteristic of the portfolio is therefore also that, 1), it offers pathways/modules to 'fix' a certain skills and that, 2), it explains, either in text or in a special portfolio class/tutorship, how developing one particular skill reverberates in other skills: e.g. developing intercultural competence, a people skill, will also impact on the broad-mindedness and adaptability that are required in solving complex problems.

To be decided: monitoring the portfolio. Meeting minimum requirements? Assigning credits (for example by linking to CM2008)?

Portfolio build-up

Year 1

Getting used to the portfolio. Making visible those relevant employability skills that are developed in the programme. Reflection assignment end of year 1, integrated in CM1011.

Year 2/3

In Yr 2 and 3, there are activities that by nature (immersion, intensity, change of setting) invite reflection and goal setting. Year 3 especially will be involved with future thinking/goal setting. Actively encourage students to identify gaps but also to showcase their best work and help their employability graph to grow.

Ideally, there's some coaching here – tutor groups, interviews, etc. Internship academic supervisors could for instance have group interviews with their interns before and after the internship. For reasons of planning, this should be done well before and well after. Such additional coaching will need some careful thought and structuring. See for example Precision Consultancy (p.43, in Comp. folder), the worksheet Reflective Activity – Employability Skills in Action. This worksheet can be used to list activities (pre-existing or yet to be designed) that can be used to demonstrate or apply relevant Employability Skills.

Online modules to fix identified gaps

This can go either or both of two ways; (a) individual improvement and (b) filling perceived gaps in the curriculum for all students. So, on the one hand, a collection of general online modules to fix certain personal lacks (i.e. on being confident (Self-regulation) and assertive (Communication) or on improving time management (part of Planning and Organising and of Self-Regulation); on the other: a module on teamwork (Solving Complex problems, People Skills, Communication) or leadership (Initiative and Enterprise) that then is integrated into a particular (suitable) course.

Plan for development:

1. Early March: site visit Nottingham Trent on employability skills
2. Rest of March & April: Based on input from new insights and colleagues in the department: refine
3. March-April; Develop clear view of portfolio requirements; investigate possibilities; sign up for a pilot. Current state of affairs:
 - Pebblepad (<https://www.pebblepad.co.uk/features.aspx>): Mijke Slot is looking into this option and it is being tested now for privacy by Eur. Joining for a pilot is on the cards. Pebblepad is a UK-developed instrument.
 - Some EUR schools (ESL) will have a pilot with Portfolium (<https://www.instructure.com/portfolium/canvas>): in sept. 2020
 - The UVA created a taskforce that compared three players on the market; the two mentioned above plus Scorion. The reportⁱ they wrote is clear and detailed. It convincingly favours Pebblepad.

They reject Portfolium for its strong flavor of / connection to social media and are worried about privacy for this matter. They praise Pebblepad because of its flexibility, intuitive (student) usage, and combining showcase, assess, and reflect elements. It has a lifelong availability possibility. Pebblepad offers good and continuous support which is needed because, they warn, developing and implementing a portfolio is a demanding task that can take a couple of years since you don't get it right from the start. It has a good track record, is userfriendly, and it is compatible with Canvas. There is no detailed one-by-one comparison with Scorion or Portfolium however.

4. Start with a few courses/components in each year, then revise/develop and grow
5. Or: Start with a 3-yr basic design including 1 or 2 flexible elements
6. In both cases: work with a pilot, a selected group of 20-25 students.

ⁱ Nynke Kruiderink (FMG), Natasa Brouwer-Zupancic (FNWI), Robert van Wijk (FNWI), Guusje Smit (FMG&FNWI). (n.d.): Choosing the right portfolio tool for the UvA