

Title: **Developing reflective practice for new academics using an ePortfolio**

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Abstract:

Session Learning Outcomes

By the end of this session, delegates will be able to:

- Share experiences of developing reflective practice for new practitioners.
- Discuss the introduction of the eportfolio into the PGCHE by one university as a tool for reflective practice
- Discuss the enablers and limitations of the eportfolio tool for reflective practice.
- Explore how the development of the eportfolio tool can support the development of professional identity for new academics and link to continuing professional development post-PGCHE.

Session Outline

Key issues to be addressed are:

This session will focus on how the use of an eportfolio has been developed to encourage reflective thinking for participants on the Post-graduate Course in Higher Education (PGCHE) and as a living document post-PGCHE (Cambridge, 2008) at Nottingham Trent University (NTU).

Reflective practice is a key area for academics new to higher education; they need to develop deep level reflections that critically synthesise theory and practice to provide evidence of quality learning outcomes. 'The purpose [of reflection] is to develop professional knowledge, understanding and practice that incorporates a deeper form of learning which is transformational in nature and is empowering, enlightening and ultimately emancipatory' (Black and Plowright, 2010, p 246).

What frameworks, if any, do tutors need to provide to encourage a rich narrative (Fielder et al, 2009), deep level reflections, and demonstrate knowledge and learning (Young 2008), while also responding to tensions reported by participants? How important is it for the new academic to develop an eportfolio that enables feedback from peers, tutors and experienced colleagues?

This session seeks to respond to these questions through discussion with delegates from different universities with different experiences. There is also opportunity, through discussion

to identify enablers and limitations to using an eportfolio for new academics to develop their reflections in preparation for academic practice (eg staff transitions, orientation, and induction) and, in turn, their professional identity, both during and beyond the PGCHE.

Session Activities and Approximate Timings

10	Starter – discussion of the use of eportfolios within the PGCHE – this would explore some of the experiences of the delegates.
5	Explanation of one University’s experiences, including lessons learnt.
25	<p>Opportunity for discussion in group(s) depending on size. To focus on:</p> <p>An opportunity to share the experiences of others.</p> <p>Inhibitors and enablers to using ePortfolios – what are these for new academics?</p> <p>How the ePortfolio can help to develop deep level reflections.</p> <p>Are the experiences of PGCHE participants different to other post-graduate students in developing their professional identity through the eportfolio?</p> <p>What frameworks do we need to provide for participants on the PGCHE?</p> <p>Flip chart to record responses.</p>
5	Plenary and final questions, thoughts, and the way forward for individuals – shared on a flip chart. Setting up a network of interested delegates.

References

- Cambridge, D (2008) Audience, integrity, and the living document: eFolio Minnesota and lifelong and lifewide learning with ePortfolios, *Computers & Education* 51, 1227-1246
- Black, P, and Plowright, D (2010) A multi-dimensional model of reflective learning for professional development, *Reflective Practice*, 11 (2) 245-258
- Fiedler, R, Mullen, L, Finnegan, M (2009) Portfolios in Context: A Comparative Study in Two Preservice Teacher Education Programs, *Journal of Research on Technology in Education* 42(2), 99-122
- Young, D. ‘Lifelong Learning: learning to work or working to learn’, Universities Association for Lifelong Learning Conference, York. (2008).