

e-Portfolios; Mapping Students' learning journeys

Bethan Hughes

Alex Spiers

Kingsway House, 2nd Floor, Hatton Garden, Liverpool, United Kingdom L3 2AJ

Liverpool John Moores University

Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU) is leading the way in the United Kingdom in formally recognising employability skills. Employability is an identified need within Higher Education:

“Institutions need to ensure that there is coherence in what they are seeking to achieve in respect of widening participation, learning and teaching, retention, employability and life-long learning.”(Knight, Yorke, 2004).

Personal Development Planning (PDP) is an important vehicle to facilitate life long learning and employability. The UK's Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) describes PDP as a:

“Structured and supported process to develop the capacity of individuals to reflect upon their learning and achievement, and to plan for their own personal education and career development.” (QAA, 2000)

In 2005 a requirement was introduced for all higher education institutions in the UK to provide guidance and opportunities for PDP; a commitment introduced and supported by the QAA. LJMU is committed to this initiative and is offering a student experience that is not only of a high standard, but that offers “added value”. A new e-Portfolio system is currently being used to help support the PDP Process and the development of Graduate Skills initiative within LJMU. This is a large scale implementation which is influencing all curriculum programmes. Using the tools within the e-portfolio, students have a wide variety of options to help create a personalised portfolio of reflection and evidence to help tell the story of their learning journey. Many successes and challenges were faced at various stages, from conception right through to implementation, and these will be described to pass on our experience. In addition there will be an explanation of evaluation outcomes and future developments.

Keywords: e-portfolios, case study