

How does e-portfolio software support students' engagement with learning?

The University of Kent is currently piloting e-portfolio software in three academic departments, Philosophy, Kent Business School and the Kent Institute of Medical and Health Studies.

For this session I will draw on examples of student engagement with learning through their use of and attitudes towards e-portfolio software. In this context what are the specific factors that support students' academic development? This work focuses on three main areas: reflection on professional development, learning from feedback and key skills development. The study will try to find out what factors serve to support student engagement or disengagement?

This session will draw on information gathered from students at the University of Kent via questionnaires and group /individual interviews about their engagement with learning.

As a curriculum developer responsible for Kent's PDP project and academic skills tutor I am interested to find out how students develop their key skills* during their time at University. I am particularly interested in the progression of students from dependent to independent learners. I propose a short paper followed by discussion possibly with an activity, there will be ample time for discussion and questions.

- Please see attached list of Key skills taken from PDP Keynote project website (restricted access)

http://spider.kent.ac.uk/PDP/sitefiles/Keynote_PDP-sitefiles/skills_list.htm

Communication

- Publicity for a student society
- Writing letter to raise sponsorship
- Member of the staff/student committee
- Oral presentations
- Project reports
- Canvassing for elections
- Public speaking/ debating
- Talking to visiting 6th form students

Numeracy

- Treasurer of a student society
- Work experience involving money
- Negotiating prices for a social function
- Statistical analysis in course work

IT Skills

- Using e-mail to communicate
- Word processing reports and essays
- Producing publicity for student societies
- Using the WWW as a source of information

Learning to Learn

- Setting and meeting academic deadlines
- Prioritising workloads
- Organising a trip or social event
- Using learning logs to aid reflective practice
- Demonstrating and tutoring

Working with Others

- Membership of student committees
- Team sports
- Membership of orchestra, choir or band
- Sharing a flat successfully
- Staging a play or musical