



## 10 Questions to Ask When Selecting an ePortfolio Platform

Selecting an ePortfolio platform for teaching and assessment is not a simple task. Commercial versus free, proprietary versus open source, hosted versus cloud, etc. are just some of the basics to consider. The following ten questions may help you to make the right decision in the selection of an ePortfolio platform to meet your needs.

### 1. Budget

Do you have a budget?

- A lack of budget may restrict the platforms that are available to you.
- Will your budget cover all costs such as domain names, hosting, numbers of users, data transfer, storage, support, etc.?
- Is the cost of the platform a once-off cost or a recurring cost such as an annual subscription?
- Are there associated costs such as hardware, installation, supporting software (databases, etc.)?

### 2. Institutional support

Do you have institutional support?

- Is your institution supportive of the idea of using ePortfolios for teaching and assessment?
- Do you have the support of the IT department?
- Do you need the support of the IT department or other departments in the institution, such as the library?
- Do your colleagues support the idea of ePortfolios?
- Do students support the idea of ePortfolios?

### 3. Hosting

Where will the platform be hosted?

- Will this platform be hosted on the institution's network or will it be externally hosted?
- Does the institute need to manage the hosting of the platform or is it a cloud-based solution?
- Where will the data be stored? For example, will it be stored outside of the EU? If so, are there issues with data protection or other legal considerations?
- Will the location of the platform impact on the platform's performance, reliability or access?

### 4. Match user base

Who will be using the platform?

- Will the platform be used by staff, students, employers, external examiners or open to public viewing?
- Do the features and usability of the platform match your users' needs and abilities?
- How is access to the platform managed for various users and user groups?
- Has it been designed with accessibility and universal design in mind?

## **5. Breadth of use**

How will users make use of the platform?

- Will all of the users make use of the platform in the same way?
- Do some users require features that other users do not?
- Do some users require additional storage or the ability to add file types such as video, audio, large documents and so on?
- Does the platform support mobile users? Is there app support or access?
- Does it support offline use?

## **6. Support**

Who will support the platform?

- What level of support is required for the various user types?
- Who will provide support?
- Are there existing support materials (tutorials, documentation, etc.) and how can users access these?
- Are there constraints on support (time, costs, users, number of issues, etc.)?

## **7. Privacy, security and integrity**

How does the platform manage privacy, security and integrity?

- How secure is the platform?
- Has the platform been tested?
- Does the platform support backups?
- Can ePortfolios be migrated or moved to other platforms?
- Does the platform offer varying levels of privacy?
- Do users have control over the privacy of content?

## **8. Integration with VLE and other systems**

Can the platform be integrated with other systems?

- Does the platform support recognised interoperability standards such as Learning Tools Interoperability (LTI)?
- Can the platform be integrated with institutional systems such as the VLE, student records, active directory, etc.?
- Does the platform support digital badging (open badges, etc.)?
- How can user accounts be created and managed?
- How is work and/or evidence submitted for grading and assessment?

## **9. Support for teaching and learning activities**

How does the platform support teaching and assessment activities?

- What are the needs of your teaching and learning environment, and how can the platform meet these?
- Can the platform be used to create a personal learning space?
- Do you need students to create ePortfolios that provide evidence of learning?
- Does the platform support various assessment processes (formative and summative feedback, peer review, marking, blind marking, anonymous reviews, external examiner access, etc.)?
- Does it provide features that support effective teaching and assessment (templates, rubrics, quick downloads, marking tools, feedback tools, etc.)?

## **10. Future**

What does the future hold for this platform?

- Is the platform provided by a reliable vendor or open-source community?
- Are you confident that the platform is likely to exist in the future?
- How are upgrades managed and do you have control over when upgrades take place?
- Is the platform used by a large community or user base?
- Is the user community backed up by events, conferences, publications, etc.?