

ePortfolios

The easiest way to think of an ePortfolio is: a fantastic way to reduce that huge pile of paper evidence of your teaching and professional development. While it is not currently compulsory for teachers to have an ePortfolio, it is a smart move away from folders and paper piles and boxes of evidence that you currently need to plow through to find evidence of your meeting the National Professional Standards. An ePortfolio can also be used to promote yourself professionally or to share resources with colleagues around the world.

There are two main ways to go about beginning an ePortfolio. The first way is 'safer' and is generally preferred by those who are sceptical or not confident with technology. This can involve setting up dedicated folders on your harddrive for the Professional Standards and accumulating evidence either solely within the folders, or creating a PowerPoint or some other such presentation that displays your evidence.

The second way is to go online and create an ePortfolio using a hosted site, such as Google Sites, Weebly, Pebblepad or Wordpress (there are many others, but these are the most common and popular). Studywiz also has an ePortfolio section.



The final option available is to do a combination of both of these things. That is, have an online medium to display evidence, but also collate things on a hard drive, USB or CDs and DVDs. This could also mean that you use online tools such as Prezi, slideshare or infographics to highlight key samples of evidence.

Before beginning anything, you need to make some decisions about what your ePortfolio will be for and how you're going to go about it.

Decision 1: am I confident with technology?

Decision 2: is it for a resume/CV or evidence of Professional Standards?

Decision 3: minimal maintenance or am I willing to spend time on it?

Decision 4: starting from scratch or 'renovating' existing support documents?

Decision 5: am I happy to pay for a site or must everything always be free?

Once you've made these decisions, you can then think about the best way to begin your ePortfolio. Regardless of which option you choose, you will need to spend quality time planning how it will be laid out. Think of it like building a house – a solid foundation will keep you going for many years!

Factors to include in your planning:

Online	Offline
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do I want a hosted site that gives me more features or more storage (GB) space? • Is simple to edit important or can I tolerate more complicated sites? • Who are my audience and what will appeal best to them? • Do I want to include other features such as a blog, photo gallery? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will I keep things in folders on my computer? • Will I use a PowerPoint to highlight key aspects? • Do I want to access/include online tools such as Prezi? • How will I keep a backup copy? • How will I keep track as I upgrade computers/technology? • How will I display physical evidence such as student work, products and demonstrations of classroom teaching?
General	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How much time am I willing to dedicate to ongoing maintenance? • Where and how will I keep a backup of all documents? • Who is your audience? • Is this an ongoing portfolio or do I want to separate evidence year by year? 	