

## ePortfolios at Albany Senior High School Mark Osbourne – Deputy Principal

NZ Ministry of Education 2010 seminar

Vision and values, and how they fit with the use of eportfolios  
(<http://ashs.school.nz>)

What I'd like to do now is to take a very short amount of time to show you an eportfolio, and show you how one builds an eportfolio. I think it is really important, without this becoming a software 'how to' session, for you to know how easy it is for a student to construct an eportfolio and go through that process of beginning to reflect on things.

It's a three-step process – the gathering and collection of artefacts. An artefact might be photograph, it might be a video that's recorded on a cell phone, or it might be a piece of creative writing. It might be anything that you want to showcase and place learning stories around. That then is placed into an eportfolio, and you could have multiple eportfolios. You could have different artefacts achieving different things in different eportfolios.

We were having a conversation before, one of the things that we have to really get our heads around for the potential of this, is to think about how one artefact can actually be telling different stories in different contexts. That's a really untapped potential for us and an area where we would like to do more work.

The third step in this process is to share that artefact with other people. It is really important to note that learner power and learner control is absolutely fundamental in most eportfolio systems, particularly in Mahara, in *myportfolio.school.nz*.

When you create a view by a default, nobody can see that view. The learner has to actively share that with someone, so there's never the possibility that they will inadvertently share something that is sensitive and really open and honest of them inadvertently. So the learner is in control at all times.

So if we go to... this is *myportfolio.school.nz*. You can see that this is me, I'm in a number of groups, so that's made up of different people. I've created friends with people then pulled those people into groups and joined other groups. If we click on 'my portfolio', there are three different areas – blogs. Blogging is built in by

default in my portfolio. You can have as many blogs as you want – you can have a creative writing blog, a sport reflection blog, you can have as many as you want. It is very easy to pull one of those blog entries in, those reflective journals are a better way to describe them, and place them on an eportfolio. So the metacognition, the reflection that's occurring in that blog is really easy to pull in and place next to an artefact, because that's where the really interesting stuff happens.

The second area is files, so that's where you upload your video or scanned photo or your piece of writing or whatever you want to show in your eportfolio, then you have what Mahara calls a 'view'. A 'view' is an eportfolio; it is just what Mahara calls an eportfolio. You can see that I've created quite a few here. I was trying to get my head around flexible learning spaces. We have learning commons – five classroom equivalent, open-learning classrooms in our school. So there might be three or four classes going on at one point in time. I need to get my head around how we could make the best use of technology in this space. So I just started dumping all of my ideas into the 'view' there. There is another called future computing toys that I've found. I might come back to these one day, and it's really just a place for me to reflect on these things that I've come across.

I've actually created one called 'eportfolios', which I will show you in a moment. If we go into 'combining technology and flexible learning spaces', this is an eportfolio. This is one of my many eportfolios and as you can see it's made up of a range of different components. This is a text box here, where I have put some information. There is a list of files – these are research studies that I've found on flexible learning spaces and the best way to use flexible learning spaces. There are some files to look at to see the research that I've done. I've pulled in a video from YouTube and I've got some other bits and pieces.

So the eportfolio is constructed out of those different components - files that you upload, links that you pull in, multimedia that you've got. The multimedia side of the eportfolios is really important when we start talking about the key competencies, video and audio in particular. Building...one of the great things about the eportfolio is that it's iterative and happens over time, but it can also capture time really well. So we know that the key competencies will be accessed through doing, it's that performativity that Miranda talked about.

We've got these little, high-definition video cameras. That's \$200 each. You push the red button and it records high-definition video. You flip out the USB and plug it in to the computer, and upload that to your eportfolio. We've got eight of those. The languages classes are using them because they are moving towards

portfolio-based assessment. There is a real movement in languages. So the students are recording themselves, not only MP3s and audio files, but also video files of them speaking in the language that they are studying. They then have to gather together, as part of their assessment that is ongoing over the course of the year, three artefacts that demonstrate them meeting the requirements of the standard. So they are the ones choosing which of their suite of a dozen or twenty recordings shows their meeting of the standard, which is incredibly empowering for learners. It is really easy to do – the cell phone does the same thing – push a button to record it and upload to your eportfolio and drop it in.

So it is extremely easy to use, it's very intuitive; it's drag and drop, web2. Because of the social networking built in to it, students are befriending each other and creating groups.

At the bottom of every page are two things – one of them is the ability to add feedback. By the way, if you want access to this view, and another cool feature of Mahara...if you type in: <http://bit.ly/eportfolios> - that will take you to this view. I've shared this view and I've made this public, so anyone can view it and I am happy for people to see.

Down the bottom of each view is the feedback tab and this is where the conversations go on. If you would like to place feedback on my view, then you click feedback and you place it. What I do with my tutorial groups is say 'that's wonderful, it's a fantastic eportfolio, but you haven't shown me much of your learning in science. Can you make sure you include something in science.' We have those conversations. That's just an open-ended tool. If you want to see more about a particular key competency or a particular level of the curriculum, then that's available for you to use.

The other thing is the cybersafety that is built in to it. The ability to report objectionable content is also really important for students to be able to feel safe.

The third step when creating a view is to share it with people. Like I said, by default everything is private, but when you click 'edit view access' ... by default no one can see anything. If I wanted to share it with Miranda I would search for Miranda's name and say 'only Miranda can see this.' You can also add particular users, so all of my friends can see this now, and I can set time limits as well, so from today at 4pm until next Tuesday at 3pm all of my friends can see this. Really useful for tertiary applications and jobs if are showcasing your skills and abilities, but you don't want that person to have access to that eportfolio forever.

