Using an E-Portfolio to Prepare Veterinary Graduates for Global Employability

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Background

ALTC Collaborative Grant 2008 & 09
*Enhance Communication and Life Skills in Veterinary Students*

E-portfolio component – trial *(Vet Prof Life, yrs 1 to 5)*

Blackboard E-portfolio module

Opportunity to demonstrate competencies

Vet employment criteria – survey 2000
Competencies for high-performance, high-wage (Global) workers

- Flexibility, adaptability
- Problem-solving
- Decision-making
- Creative thinking
- Self-motivation
- Capacity for reflection

SCANS Report (1991), USA
Secretary’s Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills
Tasks – 5th year Vet students

- Veterinary Professional Life V
- Clinical Rotations 28 wks
- Externships 4 wks

Reflection exercises for assessment; guided reflections based on 12 weeks Practice visits

Offered two prizes for E-Portfolio
  ($300; $200)
Electronic Portfolio Prize

‘Showcase Portfolio’

• Provide evidence of your professional competencies, skills, attitudes

• Be creative in preparing a Portfolio

• Evidence may include written work, video clips (with simulated clients), images, marked assignments or tests, comments from veterinary practitioners, employers, or your own reflections.
5 Veterinary employers described what evidence they would look for in a new veterinary employee. (resource on web)

Feedback available from an expert panel including practicing veterinarians.
Outcome/Issues

• Only **one** vet student submitted Showcase Portfolio

• Technical difficulties with **access** and **functions** of software

• Easily overloaded allocated capacity

• Some staff removed facility to save tests to portfolio as artifacts

• No support from Head of School at start
Benefits
- ‘Surprisingly helpful to my learning’
- ‘10 points I learned in each Rotation’
- boosted confidence ‘I’ve actually achieved quite a lot’
- staff member learnt more about student’s extra work; (eg, editor of magazines, articles; wildlife work in Africa; quality PPTs)
Conclusions

• Make Portfolios compulsory
• Need strategies to involve more staff
• Include competency check lists (for accreditation purposes)
• Video of student interview offers appropriate supplementary information for potential employer
Progress

• Dean now funding new trial
• 2 Curriculum Conveners actively supporting use of e-Portfolio
• Dean’s assistant involved in support
• We are sharing information with ALTC collaborators
ePortfolio Review Team

• Terms of reference
• Developed wish-list of functions in ePortfolio system
• Ranked functions according to importance
ePortfolio Review

• Reviewed 4 systems according to wish-list

• Investigating, evaluating and implementing emerging technologies guidelines also being developed by LTSG

• scenarios written by staff and reviewed / developed in workshop
ePortfolio Review

• 3 scenarios developed

  – record data experiences in classes, prac exercises, placements

  – repository for storing and showcasing evidence of competencies, achievements etc

  – record an action learning project and gather feedback
ePortfolio Review

- Demonstrations of 2 systems’ responses to 3 scenarios
- Feedback gathered from staff
- Trialing Pebblepad in 2009
Discussion

What is your experience with ePortfolios?