

# Tutorial 1

## ePortfolio



**Erasmus Plus - proPIC Project**

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# What is an ePortfolio?

Audio 1.1 Getting started





## Portfolio and ePortfolio: definitions

Shulman (1998) defines the teacher's working portfolio as "a structured documentary history of a set of coached or mentored accomplishments, substantiated by samples of student portfolios, and fully realised only through reflective writing, deliberation, and conversation" (ibid., 36-37). It seems from this

definition that the focus lies on the **process** of creating the portfolio, not on the product.

Portfolios are effective tools for **teacher training** and for **continuous**

**(self-)assessment**. This dual aim of portfolios for training and assessment allows students to show evidence of their learning processes and their reflection. Portfolios are **dynamic** by their very nature.

Further, they help students to self-regulate and monitor their learning.

A portfolio consists the following parts:

- a **starting point reflection**: a snapshot of the initial stage of the training process;
- a **compilation of documents**: samples of learner's work, which report on the learner's progress, as well as **reflections** that underline the reason why the samples were selected and why these are meaningful in relation to his/her learning process;
- a **final reflection**: a portfolio closing.

Portfolios can provide students with the opportunity to report on their achievements, strengths and limitations or needs. Further, portfolios can foster the development of students' professional competences, as well as support their academic education and career path.



**The many functions of a portfolio:** Can you guess which aims match with the different functions of a portfolio?

Adapted from Danielson & Abruntyn (1997)

Question 1 of 8

It is an intentional collection of work guided by learning objectives that serves as a "holding tank": pieces of learners work are collected here until they move to an assessment or showcase portfolio.

- A.** Working portfolio
- B.** Showcase portfolio
- C.** Assessment portfolio



Check Answer



Electronic portfolios, or ePortfolios, in contrast to their paper-based counterparts, contain **multimedia and hypermedia** and can offer certain **communication capabilities** (Lamont, 2007). They provide a framework that can include texts, images, audio and video. Further, they can easily be edited and updated. Hypertextual features and the possibility to incorporate communication facilities make it possible to share e-portfolios with the class/seminar or even with the public.

Díaz et al. (2012, pp.106) point out that a digital portfolio must be part of the **whole learning and teaching process** in order to activate its learning potential. It must be part of an ongoing process and not only a single event or an isolated assessment tool. It has to be suitable to show students' development.

The ePortfolio also offers assessment possibilities that are consequently not limited to the final product or the results of the learning process. On the one hand, a portfolio must allow a continuous, **formative and constructive assessment** that can give an account on the student's performance skills and provide a basis for feedback. On the other hand, a portfolio must facilitate the assessment of a **broad spectrum of competences**, both acquired skills and assimilated knowledge, during the learning process.



## Key concepts of portfolios:

*Reflection, Dynamism, Process, Samples of Evidence*

Starting a portfolio implies **assuming a reflection process**, in the description and reflection carried out at the starting point, in the selection of samples that evidence learning and in the argumentation of that evidence. This reflection also includes the assessment of your own process in relation to your own learning goals.

In teacher training, reflection helps to become **aware of your own belief system** regarding the processes that are developed in the act of teaching. According to Korthagen (2001, p. 51) "one of the most important functions of reflection is to help teachers become aware of their mental structures, subject them to a critical analysis, and if necessary, restructure them."



A portfolio reflects your development as a **dynamic process**. This process allows you to **collect data** from your learning and professional development, compiled and written by you with exhaustive reflection.

The **samples of evidence** that may be included in a portfolio can come both from formal learning (class activities, article reviews, research summaries, internship reports, etc.) or from informal learning (any activity performed outside of the academic domain that provides a learning experience).

## Key concepts of ePortfolios

The interactive potential of an ePortfolio lies in its **multimodal** and **hypertextual features**, which allow for initiating **communication** and interaction with other users through sharing it.

**Multimodality** offers the possibility of constructing a discourse that is communicated through **different** modes or channels (Kress, 2010). These modes include images, texts, layouts, and recordings (audio and/or video).

**Hypertextuality** makes it possible to present all the information in a sequential and *networked* way: the reader can create his or her own reading path. Hypertext gives the author the option to guide the reader through different scenarios. Further, the author can integrate **cross**-references within the portfolio, by including

external hyperlinks to other online documents (Pujolà y Montmany, 2010).

Another key aspect facilitated by ePortfolios is the potential to develop learning communities (Coll et al., 2008). Some platforms allow users to share their work with their colleagues or other professionals. Just like in any other social media network, it is possible to share portfolios and leave comments.

### **Activity 1:** Start reflecting and writing your portfolio

Try to remember a learning experience that you liked or a course that made you feel good. Try to explain the reasons why, focusing on the following aspects:

- What was the course content?
- How did the teacher introduce it?
- What did you learn?
- What activities/tasks were used?
- How did the teacher treat you and the rest of the students?
- How would you describe the relationship among the students?

Can you relate any of these aspects to what you consider a good learning and teaching experience? Write a short paragraph (no more than 200 words) that describes your experiences. Please share this paragraph on your ePortfolio.



# The theoretical framework



## An introduction to Reflective Practices (RP)

Before starting to think about how we go about creating a learning ePortfolio, we need to understand some underlying key concepts based on the theoretical framework of Reflective Practices (RP).

In the following video clips, Dr. Olga Esteve, researcher on Reflective Practices in Language Teacher Education, explains the fundamental principles of RP and explains central issues of this topic.

### **Video 2.1** Reflective Practices and Professional Development



Find the video [here](#).

### **Video 2.2** Key concepts of Reflective Practices



Find the video [here](#).



**Video 2.3** Strategies for teacher trainees to engage in Reflective Practices



Find the video [here](#).

**Activity 2:** Create a mind map

Put together all the concepts mentioned and explained in the video clips, creating a mind map or diagram that summarises them.

You can also connect these concepts with some other teaching terms or concepts that come to your mind.

You can use texts, shapes, figures or images.

In order to create your digital mind map, you can also try these apps:



Please share your mind map on your ePortfolio.



# The structure





## The structure of an ePortfolio

We need to keep in mind that an ePortfolio is not simply a collection of achievements gathered by one person but a tool that goes far beyond this. We understand portfolios in a broader sense as a tool to **collect** and **reflect upon evidence of learning**.

Therefore, the different parts that shape an e-portfolio invite the student to analyse and evaluate the implied learning experiences showed in **compiled pieces of evidence**.

All the selected samples of learning evidence will be **accompanied by a corresponding reflection**.

A portfolio is essentially comprised of three parts:

<b>PARTS</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>
<i>Starting Point</i>	It usually shows the background of the portfolio's author and the motivation behind it.
<i>Learning Evidence</i>	It includes of any type that show learning evidence or 'good practice' (.e.g recordings, diary entries). These samples are selected by the author of the portfolio.
<i>Closing Phase</i>	Conclusions can be done as an entry, like a final reflection that closes the period of learning and explores future lines of action derived from the reflection of the portfolio as a whole.

Table 3.1 The general structure of a portfolio

## The Starting Point

The first section will help you to **place yourself at the beginning** of your learning process and to become aware of who you are as professional (e.g., your role as a teacher and as a learner, and your educational background)

Moreover, it is an opportunity to **plan your goals** and **describe your expectations**. It is a way to think about **your needs and concerns**. The starting point is a touchstone from which the rest of the portfolio is constructed as it contains the goals of the learning process and your approaches to achieving them.

The starting point can be initiated by considering the following introspective questions or prompts:

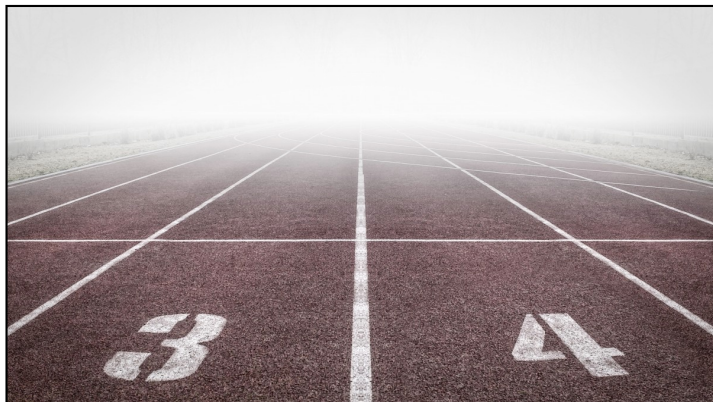
**Who I am as a teacher learner:** What is my learning background? What are my experiences in the domain that I am starting now, which are my initial beliefs about what makes teaching and learning effective? What is my teaching background?

**Where I am heading in the learning process:** What are my personal learning goals? What do I expect from them? How do I think the teaching and learning process will develop? What are my interests?

The content of the Starting Point can be summed up by the following points:

- Your knowledge about the subject, with respect to the academic education that you have previously received.
- Your beliefs regarding how the subject should be learned.
- Your expectations about the formative process (subject, course, mastery, etc.) that you are about to start.
- The learning goals that you plan for this process and you expect to achieve.

It is possible that the learning goals of the subject are already known by you at the time of writing your Starting Point because the course has already started or you know the teacher's course planning. However, in the starting point the **learning goals must be personal**, in order to highlight certain elements of the subject that you are going to focus on or other aspects that you have not previously considered.



It is essential that your **goals are explicit and clear**, because the construction of the portfolio has to be based upon them. The learning evidence and your reflections will - as far as it is possible - respond to these goals.

Therefore, the Starting Point can be seen as a **snapshot**. In contrast, the reflection about the learning samples has a **dynamic character** in that the portfolio is constantly growing every time you include evidence of your learning process and we reflect on it.

Moreover, the purpose of the personal action plan must demonstrate how you will achieve your set goals.

- Your portfolio is a personal document: show yourself
- Use images and links that have a relationship with your previous educational background
- Emphasize your achievements
- Create one entry to introduce yourself as a teacher and another to explain your goals, challenges and expectations.

In the following videos, Paula Novillo, a portfolio user both as teacher trainee and now as a teacher educator, reflects on her process of starting a portfolio. Furthermore, she underlines the importance of creating a good Starting Point to engage in the portfolio process. She gives us some useful strategies.

**Video 3.1** What does starting an ePortfolio imply?



Find the video [here](#).

**Video 3.2** Challenges you can encounter while developing your ePortfolio



Find the video [here](#).



**Video 3.3** Connecting the Starting Point with Reflective Practice



Find the video [here](#).

**Video 3.4** Recommendations for creating your Starting Point



Find the video [here](#).

## Learning Evidence (I)

The pieces of evidence that you will select will be taken from the **learning experiences** you have had so far. Often, the ones which struck you most, which troubled or surprised you, are the most beneficial.

The type of evidence that should be included in a teaching portfolio to illustrate your learning process can be of different kind: lesson activities, oral presentations, readings, debates, trainer's feedback during one of your internships (e.g., written/oral feedback, reports). These are examples of **formal learning evidence**. However, you can include pieces of evidence from **informal learning**, such as issues you have come across during workshops/seminars, or an informal talk with colleagues/other trainees.

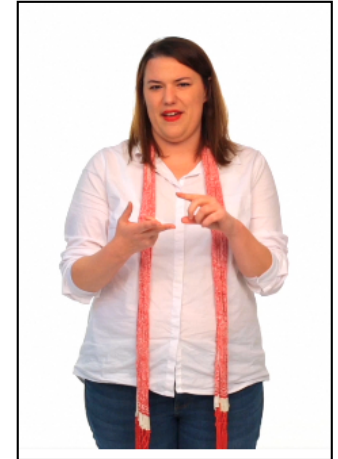
Moreover, it is crucial that you also include a **description of evidence**, adding information regarding:

- What is it about?
- When was it collected?
- For what purpose was it collected?

The reflection that accompanies the sample of evidence of your learning experience should focus on your **personal learning achievement**. It must relate to the **learning goals** specified in the starting point, and describe the **impact** that this **evidence** has had in your learning process.

As a result, the learning derived from selecting the pieces of evidence could be considered a process of **conscious learning** in itself.

In the following video clips, Azahara Cuesta, a teaching portfolio user, describes what she experienced while selecting and reflecting on her learning evidence.



**Video 3.5** What is a sample of Learning Evidence?



Find the video [here](#).

**Video 3.6** Learning Evidence and reflecting on it



Find the video [here](#).

**Video 3.7** Hotspots in Reflective Practices



Find the video [here](#).



**Video 3.8** Recommendations for selecting samples of Learning Evidence



Find the video [here](#).

## Learning Evidence (II)

Selecting evidence can be both compulsory and voluntary. Keep in mind that, although instructions can be given regarding what type of evidence should be included (e.g. a **minimum of samples**), you should incorporate the evidence that you consider most relevant.

As mentioned by Pujolà and González (2008, pp. 99-100) the pieces of evidences are “selected depending on their **meaningfulness** and validity” for the learner. As they are a central part of the portfolio, which is personal by nature, they should exemplify the learner’s needs, limitations and concerns.

The **number of samples** of Learning Evidence that are included **will vary** depending on the context in which the portfolio is used (e.g one-year course, end of teacher training).

To sum up, it is important to focus on the following aspects:

- Why did you choose these samples of evidence?
- Why are they relevant for your learning process?
- How do they relate to your learning goals?

Last but not least, it is crucial that each time you finish a phase in developing your portfolio, you establish an action plan to analyse the extent to which your personal goals are being achieved. From there, you can plan further actions. New motivations can also develop during the learning process and **new actions can be planned**.

Learning Evidence is the most relevant element of the portfolio. Selecting it and reflecting upon it can help you not only to become more aware of your own learning process, but also to link theory and practice, and become aware of your CPD.



## Closing Phase: Relation to prospective hotspots in CPD

A learning portfolio is usually used for and **aimed at a specific learning process**. That is why it is common to close it at a moment that coincides with the end of this process.

At this final point, you must **come back to your set learning goals** and determine if they were achieved and how, or why not if they were not achieved.

It is essential to understand the portfolio's **progressive nature** that emphasises the process and thus the importance of keeping it updated all the time.

The last reflection implies a general reflection about the overall learning process, as well as a **future action plan**. The purpose of this final plan is to formulate how you are going to continue developing your personal learning (portfolio) beyond the learning context in which you created it, be it another academic context or as part of your CPD.

In other words, your 'learning' portfolio can become your 'teaching' portfolio. To continue to developing professionally, **reflecting on your teaching practices and learning** should never end.

In the following video clips Paula and Azahara reflect together on the whole experience of creating their portfolios and give you some final tips.



**Video 3.9** Difficulties to sum up the learning experience in the ePortfolio



Find the video [here](#).

**Video 3.10** ePortfolio in Professional Development



Find the video [here](#).

# How to write an ePortfolio?



## ePortfolio and digital communicative competence

When you develop an ePortfolio, you can make use of digital communication and interaction. As such, **digital discourse** characteristics and the idiosyncrasies of online communication should be taken into account when designing the content of the e-portfolio.

In order to be understood by other users, as well as to promote online interaction, it is necessary to develop both communicative and digital competences that allow us to perform as a competent user.

It is necessary to acquire strategies for the development of an effective **digital communicative competence** (Pujolà & Montmany, 2010).

## Digital Communicative Competence

The internet is changing the way we communicate and interact with each other because of instant messaging applications and social media platforms (Crystal, 2004). Digital discourse has proved to present its own unique challenges. Communicative and digital competences play a role in the interpretation and construction of digital discourse, as well as online interaction. Furthermore, the use of mobile technologies is changing the way how we connect with other people.

In this intersection between communicative competence and digital competence, *Digital Communicative Competence* emerges.

In this chapter, we will explore this concept and how it fits in with diverse communicative strategies to construct web 2.0 discourse.

### **Developing digital communicative strategies as future language teachers (Slides presentation)**



**TIES 2012**  
III Congreso Europeo de Tecnologías de la Información en la Educación y en la Sociedad: Una visión crítica  
Barcelona, 1, 2 y 3 de febrero de 2012

Developing  
**digital communicative strategies**  
in the training of language teachers

Joan-Tomàs Pujolà

DRE\_DIX Proyecto EDU2008-05411

Pujolà, J.T. (2012). "Developing digital communicative strategies in the training of language teachers". *III Congreso europeo de tecnologías de la información en la Educación y en la Sociedad*.



## Write to be read on the web

To 'write' a digital text implies a variety of decisions taking into account hypertextual, multimodal and interactive features.

Here you can find a summary of important aspects to keep in mind while constructing an ePortfolio:

Table 4.1- 4.3 ePortfolio construction decisions

FEATURE	DECISIONS
<b>Hypertextuality</b>  Inserting hyperlinks	Identify hyperlink functions in the text: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• extend information</li> <li>• give examples/evidence</li> <li>• give arguments</li> <li>• link references</li> </ul>
	Address the anchor of the hyperlinks to a concept or specific term within the text.
	Organise the reading schedule.

FEATURE	DECISIONS
<b>Multimodality:</b>  Modes of distribution on the screen	Distribute the possible communication modes on the screen: static or moving images, videos, sound recordings, gadgets, different kinds of letters and graphic elements.
	Decide on a balanced distribution of modes on the screen or emphasise one or more modes over the other(s). (García y Palomeque, 2011)
	Link modes with each other in a communicative way.
	Introduce modes adequately, make reference to the original sources, preserve author rights on the visual and audiovisual material (Creative Commons Licensing)

FEATURE	DECISIONS
<b>Information capsules:</b>  Information distribution on	Select the information that you want to show in open/public access.
	Select the proper number of hyperlinks according to the screen.
	Design the screen composition distributing the information adequately.

## Ways to express reflection

There are different ways to **express a reflective process** at the discursive level, as underlined by González, Atienza and Pujolà (2015). You can express your reflection on a learning and formative action in a retrospective way after it has already taken place, or in a prospective way towards a formative and learning action that is planned for the future.

REFLECTIVE DISCURSIVE MANIFESTATION	
Retrospective reflection	Prospective reflection
Describing a formative or teaching action	Making proposals
Explaining what happened	
Arguing/ justifying a point of view	
Assess/value the formative or teaching action	
Express emotions	

Table 4. 4 Reflective Discursive Manifestation

Adapted from: González, V. Atienza, E. & Pujolà, J.T. (2015). La manifestación discursiva de la reflexión. *Linguarum Arena*, 6, 29-44

Interactivity promoted by web 2.0 design and digital discourse allows the ePortfolio to be used as a tool for **networking** and for the creation of **communities of practice and learning**. The use of social media in constructing an ePortfolio can facilitate reflective processes by, for example engaging in interactions with other pre-service teachers.

This interactive character is found not only on interactive platforms, as we will see in the next section, but also in diverse digital tools that **initiate interaction**. An example is the VEO ([Video Enhanced Observation](#)) App, which is as a tool for lesson observation. It also involves sharing data, findings and experiences with other members of the VEO online community.

Social media allows you to connect with other professionals, such as pre-service or in-service teachers, and share with them your experiences and reflections. Online commenting enables you to interact and collaborate with others, and it facilitates reflective processes with **a greater number of voices and diverse perspectives**.

Portfolio	Social Networking	Technology
Collecting	Connecting ("Friending")	Archiving
Selecting	Sharing (posting/linking/tagging)	Linking/Thinking
Reflecting	Listening (Reading)	Digital Storytelling
Directing/Goals	Responding (Commenting)	Collaborating
Presenting	<i>Interactivity &amp; Collaboration</i>	Publishing

Barret (2011). "Balancing the two faces of e-portfolios". Retrieved from:

<http://electronicportfolios.org/balance/balancingarticle2.pdf>

Examples of multimodal ePortfolios

**Interactive image 4.1** ePortfolio Example 1



**Interactive image 4.2** ePortfolio Example 2



**Interactive image 4.3** ePortfolio Example 3



**Interactive image 4.4** ePortfolio Example 4



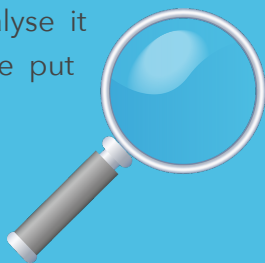
### Activity 3: Analysing ePortfolios

This is a compilation of four examples of ePortfolios. The following assessment checklist can be helpful to self-assess ePortfolios.

- Why is this a good example of an ePortfolio?
- How is it **structured**? Is it easy to follow?
- What kind of **multimodal elements** are being used (e.g., images, videos, texts)? Are they related to the content?
- Are there any **hyperlinks**? Are they related to the content?
- Does the e-portfolio invite **commenting** and foster **interactivity**?
- Is the **evidence** provided described properly?
- Are there any teaching actions? How are they described and explained, argued and evaluated?
- Does the ePortfolio contain any emotions/personal information?

On the next page you will find a short analysis of ePortfolio Example 1.

Choose **one** of the other examples and analyse it with the help of the assessment form. Please put your analysis on your own ePortfolio.



### ePortfolio: Example

The most important aspect of this example is the use of the multimodal elements and hyperlinks included throughout the entries. You can see that the teacher uses a picture to introduce the content of the first entry. This decision is not just to catch the attention of the reader, but also to introduce the reader to her main idea; she emphasises the importance of working together with colleagues, but also of reflecting individually.

Five hyperlinks are used in order to give general information, as well as to share extra information or sites not specifically related to the content. The evidence in the first entry is a description of a teaching action that is summed up properly; in a short paragraph she describes how she taught her students library rules using questioning. Furthermore, the teacher describes the reactions of the students, adding some examples. After this description she inserts a general assessment of the action. She then expresses clearly her personal beliefs on teaching and elaborates on those that are important to her. You can see that the entry has some comments. Despite that, the reactions are not shown directly on the page. It is therefore difficult to follow the discussion.

Regarding its structure, you can see that the headings of the entries are shown in a table on the right. However, the portfolio is a bit hard to follow, because you cannot see clearly an overview of its content at the beginning.



# ePortfolio platforms

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## Choosing an appropriate platform

The construction of an ePortfolio is based on the selection of an appropriate platform. Nowadays, there is a variety of platforms to choose from. Although some of them have not been created specifically to write an ePortfolio, all of them include a number of elements that can be used for an ePortfolio. For instance, Wix, Google Sites, and Weebly are platforms where you can create your own **webpage**: You can transform it not only into your portfolio but also into your personal website. Wordpress and Blogger are the most popular resources for **creating a blog**, a kind of web-diary used for different purposes, including to build a portfolio. In addition, Mahara is a specific **open-source ePortfolio system**.

All of these platforms share common features, including integrating multimodal elements that consist not only of linguistic resources but also contain images, different typefaces and visual reconstructions of texts.

The platforms are flexible, allowing users to add or skip content. They allow users to classify and prioritise information from different posts at different levels. You can also create hyperlinks to link your posts.

However, there are also differences between them. For example, there are differences regarding the aesthetics or the way you can provide and receive feedback from other users.

## 1. Weebly

Weebly is an online platform for creating your own webpage. There are free and premium versions. It has an easy interface that enables you to drag and drop different elements to compose your page. It is user-friendly and has dozens of designs to develop your own website.

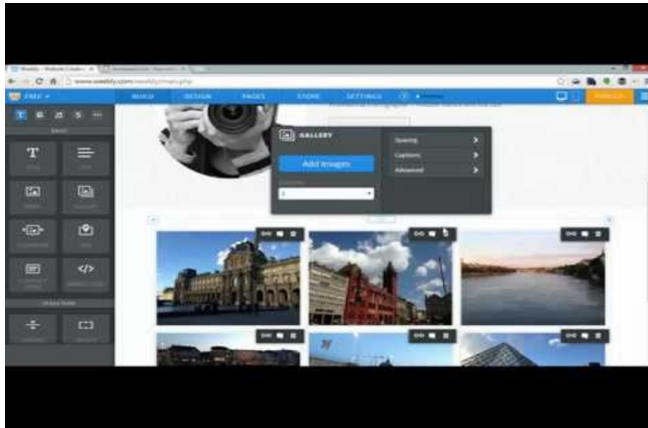
Weebly enables you to express creativity using a great variety of multimodal functions.

<b>ADVANTAGES</b>	<b>DISADVANTAGES:</b>
It is fast and secure (against hackers and spam).	Its content management system is not too efficient.
You can change templates whenever you want to without losing information.	It is difficult to move on to another platform.
You can create your webpage without knowing HTML or other codes. By only dragging and dropping elements, you can create the page. However, you cannot drag and drop the elements wherever you want.	Templates could be better and more efficient for learning e-portfolio purposes
Because you construct your own page, you don not depend on the platform's feature set.	You have to add a way of letting readers to leave comments/ feedback.

Table 5.1 Advantages and disadvantages of Weebly. Adapted from:

<https://www.shivarweb.com/4793/weebly-review/>

**Video 5.1** Setting-up an ePortfolio on Weebly: Video tutorial

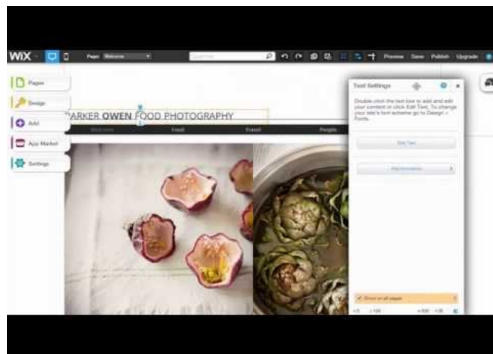


Find the video [here](#).

## 2. Wix

More than 60 million people have used [Wix](#) since the company started. *Wix* is well known for intuitive design, a wide range of interactive tools and a simplified drag and drop system. *Wix* is user-friendly, even if you do not have experience creating ePortfolios or web pages.

**Video 5.2** Setting-up an ePortfolio on Wix: Video tutorial



Find the video [here](#).

ADVANTAGES:	DISADVANTAGES
<p><i>Wix</i> has beautiful and stunning templates: you can pick a design and put in your own pictures.</p> <p>The website layout is well done.</p> <p>You can drag and drop the elements anywhere. <i>Wix</i> is very flexible in this way, offering more creative control.</p> <p><i>Wix</i> is consistently introducing new and innovative features.</p> <p>It gives you more design and feature flexibility when it comes to other elements.</p>	<p>You cannot change template once chosen.</p> <p>You have to add a way of letting readers leave comments/feedback.</p>

Table 5.2 Advantages and disadvantages of *Wix*

## 3. Google Sites

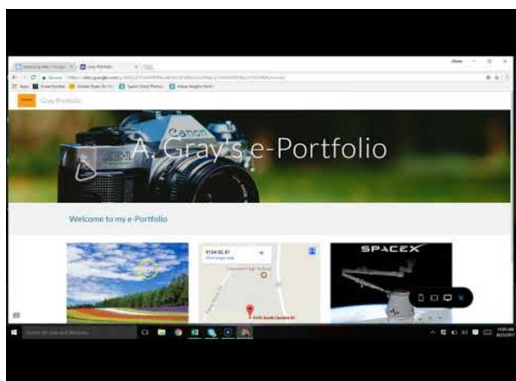
[Google Sites](#) is a free tool for creating your own webpage. It has all the characteristics of the *Google Apps*, so keep in mind that you are entering into the *Google* world, for better or worse. It is difficult to avoid further *Google* products, because your portfolio can be connected to other *Google apps* that you are using. If you are not a *Google* user, you will not have access to some possible features, such as easily adding YouTube videos, *Google Photos*, etc. Nevertheless,

Google Sites enables you to create an e-portfolio with different formats where you can capture and store different specific resources and reflect upon your academic work and your interests.

ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
It is free, but limited (there is a paid version).	It does not allow an advanced design web page.
You can create your own templates easily.	You cannot upload files larger than 20MB.
It has a user-friendly design.	You cannot upload sponsored links.
You can add Google docs, worksheets, presentations, pictures from Picasa, videos, etc.	Lack of privacy.
There are no page limits.	There are size restrictions for the files you want to upload.
It is a multi-user system.	You have to add a way of letting readers leave comments/feedback.

Table 5.3 Advantages and disadvantages of Google Sites

**Video 5.3** Setting-up an ePortfolio in Google Sites

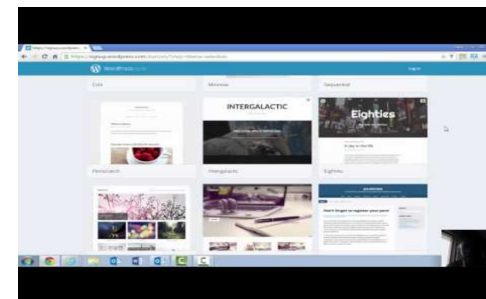


Find the video [here](#).

## 4. WordPress

Unlike the previous tools, [WordPress](#) was developed to create blogs rather than webpages. It is a free content management system that enables you to create your ePortfolio in a very easy way. In addition, because of its blog origin, *WordPress* is a user-friendly tool.

**Video 5.4** Setting-up an ePortfolio on WordPress



Find the video [here](#).

ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
It is free. Although it has a very expensive premium version, the free version has a lot of themes.	Some of the themes do not work appropriately.
It is easy to use. It is a simplified technology and you can easily add new pages, blog posts, images and much more.	You must be careful with the updates. Some plugins could ignore former customisations, so you may find nothing in your ePortfolio after an update.
<i>WordPress</i> users are very active on the web, so you can find a lot of forums with much information.	<i>WordPress</i> relies on plugins and, for this reason, it is vulnerable to malicious attacks.
	Despite the fact that its users are very active on the web, the system does not have the best technical support.

Table 5.4 Advantages and disadvantages of WordPress



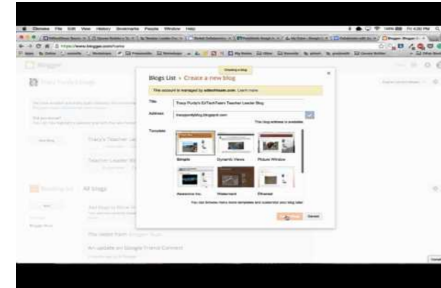
## 5. Blogger

**Blogger** is also a platform for developing blogs. *Google* bought it in 2003 and the company opted for the creation of a specific space for anyone who would like to create his or her own blog. Thus, *Blogger* can be an excellent tool to create your own ePortfolio. However, unlike the rest of the tools presented in this chapter, a great community has been established around *Blogger*.

ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
It is free and, as it is a <i>Google App</i> , has good exposure on internet.	Since it is meant to create blogs, you will find it a very specific tool, not as versatile as the rest of the tools presented in this chapter.
It has an easy and very intuitive interface. It only takes a few steps to create your ePortfolio.	There are limited templates to design your blog. The possibilities to create your own interface are scarce. The other tools offer more creative resources.
It is very easy to post content. Because it was designed to develop blogs, you can post and mark them clearly by the date posted.	You won't create a website with it; you will clearly create a blog.
You can also manage other blogs within the same dashboard.	

Table 5.5 Advantages and disadvantages of *Blogger*

### Video 5.5 Setting-up an ePortfolio in *Blogger*



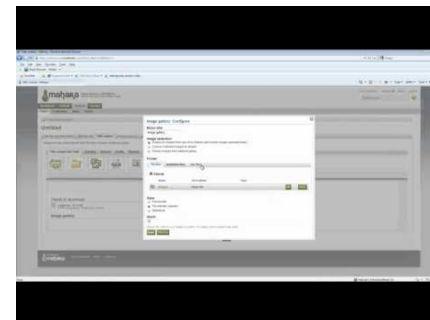
Find the video [here](#).

## 6. Mahara

As mentioned before, **Mahara** is a system developed specifically to create ePortfolios. It has been used extensively in academic and professional contexts. *Mahara* is an open-source tool that promotes collaborative work and the creation of social networks.

In *Mahara* you will distribute your different posts on tabs or folders which can be used to store your reflections and learning evidence.

### Video 5.6 Setting-up an ePortfolio on *Mahara*



Find the video [here](#).

ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
It is easy to share with other users.	<p><i>Mahara</i> can seem clunky compared to other tools. Its interface seems less attractive.</p> <p>Moving around in <i>Mahara</i> could be less straightforward than expected. Sometimes, you might have problems finding the reflections you are looking for.</p> <p>It is more difficult to manage and edit images than in other tools.</p> <p>The management of the pages is very limited.</p>
The possibility to create a community of practice is easier than with other platforms.	
The templates are easily created since there are not many options.	
You can add texts, videos, web pages and so on in a very easy way.	
Managing the stored resources is very flexible and handy.	
It is easy to receive feedback of the actual webpage you create.	

Table 5.6 Advantages and disadvantages of *Mahara*

## Posts and pages in a blog

The **content structure** in an ePortfolio is very important for its 'readability'. If you decide to construct a blog, it is important to consider the technical differences between posts and pages.

**Posts** are entries listed in reverse chronological order on the blog home page, or just in another type of order that you decide to configure from your blog settings. Posts start to accumulate when you start developing the entries of our blog. That's why it is important to tag or catalogue them with the help of any of the features provided by the blog settings.

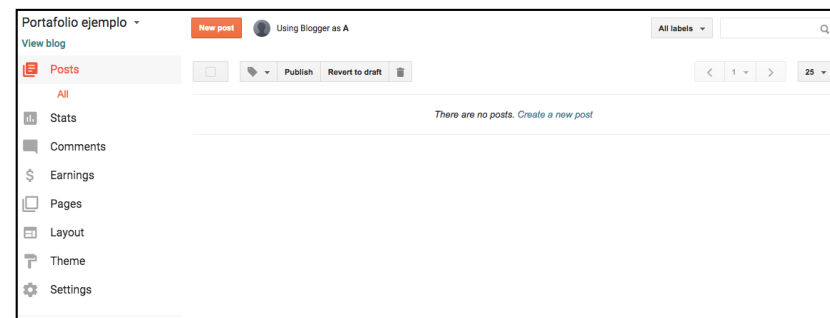
**Pages** are static, and as a result, they are not listed by date. They do not use tags or categories, due to their "permanent" and fixed display.

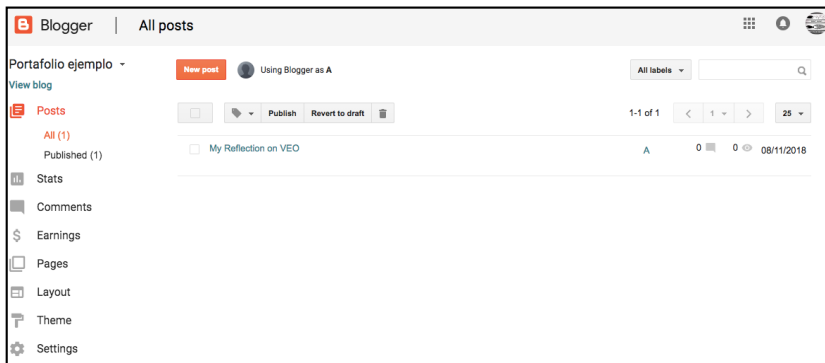
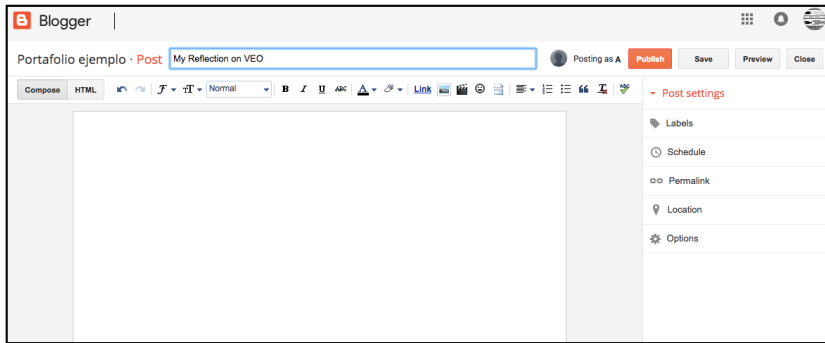
As mentioned in Chapter 3, the ePortfolio starting point constitutes an initial snapshot that will remain static, while the multiple reflections on learning evidence that will be included to our ePortfolio are continuous. It is important to use a page for your **starting point**, because it is fixed content you will be able to come back to in other moments of your professional learning process. **Posts** are the most appropriate design choice for **reflections and evidence** because these aspects of the ePortfolio are updated throughout the process.

### Example:

The following screen shots show **how to create posts and static pages** in your blog and structure your ePortfolio display in *Blogger*.

In *Blogger*, posts will be displayed on the main page. Every time you want to publish a new post, just go to 'new post' and the post editing screen will appear. Here you can edit, save it and publish your post. You can have an overview of all posts if you go back to the Post section.





## Conclusion

This brief overview of the most important platforms on which you can your ePortfolio has hopefully given you the opportunity to get to know the main characteristics, advantages and disadvantages. We hope that, with all the information suggested, you will be able to choose the platform that is best for your goals.

Keep in mind that any of the platforms might be suitable and, for this reason, the choice has to depend on other aspects such as the usefulness of the interface, your web profile, the user-friendliness or how you want to showcase the information you want to provide.

If you want to add static **pages** to your ePortfolio, as your starting point, just create a page, by going to the pages section. The page editing screen will appear and you can then edit, save and publish the page. Again, in the pages section you will be able to find the page structure of the blog.

You can see below an example of a blog, where posts are displayed the main page (*Página principal*) and where there are two different static pages (*Reflexión inicial* and *La comunicabezas*)



# Final task





In this tutorial we have shown you how to set up, create and develop your own ePortfolio.

After discussing a definition of the term and key concepts of what teaching ePortfolios are based upon, we focused on the digital communicative features that characterise ePortfolios. We have highlighted some strategies, tools and platforms to create your e-portfolio.

At this point, after the prep-activities that you have been doing in this tutorial, you are completely equipped to finish creating your starting point. The prompting questions below will guide you to the **main aspects of reflection**:

### **Your initial representations and beliefs**

What is my educational background/setting/context?

What meaningful experiences of learning and teaching have I had so far?

How do I currently view language teaching and learning?

Which competences do language teachers and students need to develop?

### **Your education and training needs**

Which challenges emerge from my teaching and learning experiences?

What questions or issues arise from my current knowledge about language teaching and learning?

*In case you have had previous teaching experience:*

What positive experiences and strengths can I collect from my teaching practices?

What weaknesses do I see in my teaching practices?

### **About training and education expectations**

What do I expect from this proPIC course?

What are my personal and professional goals and aims within this course?

What are my professional teaching goals?

# Feedback

We are constantly improving our tutorials. It would be great if you could give us some brief feedback on it. Please click the symbol below.



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