Assessment of Transversal Skills with Mahara: My Learning, Rubrics, Learners’ ePortfolio Pages + Journals

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This presentation is part of the ATS2020 guides for tools series – please visit http://mahara.ats2020.eu/view/view.php?id=468 to find it and to use further guidance materials
About this presentation

• This presentation shows you how a learning and assessment cycle with Mahara can look like.

• You do not need to follow this model exactly, but please regard it as one possibility to follow, document, and assess the process of ATS2020 learning and assessment via the Mahara ePortfolio platform.

• In the following slides you will see:
  • How to create a teachers’ portfolio (providing content and assessment material for students)
  • How to embed “My Learning” into a portfolio page
  • Feedback options in Mahara
  • management options for teachers
• There will be some additional hints as well ...
How to create a teachers’ portfolio (content and assessment material for students)

Use the screencast “Create and Share Pages“, provided at http://mahara.ats2020.eu/view/view.php?id=468 if this is the first page you create in Mahara. Use your page to provide students with:

- Content for learning
- Instructions on learning, assessment and documentation of learning with Mahara, including the use of „My Learning“
- Materials for assessment, like:
  - reflection stems
  - questionnaires
  - rubrics
  - etc.
- You can set up your teaching page as a group page, as well. However, some of the functionalities shown here won’t be available for group pages. Therefore, it is recommended that you first create the page on your own, and then share it with a group (more on this later on).
Sample teachers’ portfolios

Some good practices are provided in the community of Practice on Mahara. This CoP can be found at [http://mahara.ats2020.eu/group/view.php?id=4](http://mahara.ats2020.eu/group/view.php?id=4) In case you are not a member yet, please join or ask Andrea Ghoneim ([andrea.ghoneim@gmail.com](mailto:andrea.ghoneim@gmail.com)) to add you.


On the screenshot on the left you can see how the students get first instructions on how to set their goals with „My Learning“.

Furthermore, [an example for giving guidance for the use of "MyLearning" in the framework of a learning unit called HTML](http://mahara.ats2020.eu/view/view.php?id=669) (created by Amela Sambolic Beganovic + Radovan Krajnc) is available for registered users of ATS2020 Mahara.
Additional Feature: Allow copying of pages

If you want your students’ portfolio pages to have the same structure as your teaching page, you can allow copying of the page and ask the students to copy the page to their ePortfolio in order to re-use your design/structure.

In order to do so, chose „edit content“ (1), then „share page“ (2), and, in the menu that appears, „advanced options“ (3). There, set „Allow copying“ on „yes“ (4). After having done so, your page has the additional option „copy“ (5).

Copying a page takes the focus from the design process and is – of course – a certain threat on creativity. However, it might be a solution for less experienced users and/or certain learning/assessment designs.
How to embed “My Learning” into a portfolio page

The page “ATS2020 – Work with ‘My Learning” at http://mahara.ats2020.eu/view/view.php?id=179 shows you how to find your way to the plugin “My Learning”, how to create a new learning etc. A “My Learning” created this way is only visible to the learner her-/himself. It is shared with other learners and the teacher/assessor by adding it to a Mahara page. Please see on the screenshot on the right how this is done.

1. Create a page or edit a page that was already created for the class for which you created a “Learning”
2. Choose the tab “General” on the side panel to add a learning
3. Once you drag and drop the block “Learning” into the page you can choose the “Learning to show” among the “Learnings” you have created already.
4. Now, the chosen learning is visible to everyone with whom the page is shared. (If you are not sure what this means check back to the last part of the screencast “Create and Share Pages”.)
Feedback options in Mahara:

1. Prior Knowledge/Self evaluation

- Students need to self-reflect in the beginning of their learning and at the end of a learning cycle.
- Reflection can be supported in different ways – by rubrics, by reflection stems (sentence starters) or with questionnaires. An example of Petra Mikeln, teacher in Oš Polje, Ljubljana, shows you a teaching portfolio (1), a questionnaire and some learning outcomes in the EUfolio resources section: [https://eufolioresources.files.wordpress.com/2015/03/ls-2-slovenia.pdf](https://eufolioresources.files.wordpress.com/2015/03/ls-2-slovenia.pdf)

- For the final self evaluation, students can use either the same supporting material as in the beginning or reflect basing on other guidance provided by the teacher or elaborated in classroom.

- Both, the reflection on prior knowledge (which is an initial self evaluation) and the final self evaluation can be done within my learning. Supporting material can be attached to the respective learning stage. (2)
Feedback options in Mahara: 2. Peer Feedback

- Peer Feedback can be given simply by adding a comment at the end of the page. The page author him-/herself can respond to this comment in the same way, thus making a conversation or point at changes s/he made in the page in response to the feedback.

- Feedback rules are very important. The most important rule is “respect”. In order to get more valuable feedback, the teacher can suggest some questions, propose a rubric (maybe the same as s/he will use for formative assessment), or give less strict rules like “2 stars and a wish”. The latter means that the peer has to find 2 reasons to give the page author a star, but s/he has to utter a wish as well in order to contribute to the development of the page.

- Peer feedback should be given before the final self-evaluation of the student, it should be in time to allow improvements in the Mahara page and/or in the learning artefacts displayed there.

- NB: Feedback belongs to the ePortfolio owner; S/he can delete it or hide it from the public. If a teacher needs evidence that feedback was given and received, s/he must clearly ask for it....
Feedback options in Mahara:
3. Feedback by Teacher and/or Authority

1. Follow the webinar „Working with Groups in Mahara“ at [http://mahara.ats2020.eu/view/view.php?id=468](http://mahara.ats2020.eu/view/view.php?id=468) and/or make sure your group’s settings are on „Allow submission“.

2. If this setting is on, every group member will find in the end of this page an option „submit“.

3. Once the page is submitted, the teacher/admin/tutor of the group gets a notification. Students cannot change anything in the page unless the teacher has assessed the page.
Management of Assessments

• According to the definition of ePortfolios, all ePortfolio pages belong to the creator. The same applies for feedback/assessment.

• Even though the teacher should – ideally - also give her/his assessment via the “comments”-function at the end of the page, this comment can be deleted by the student. Thus, it is recommended to keep track of one’s feedbacks additionally – via copying them to a table, via a LMS (like Moodle) or via an ePortfolio page devoted to the class.

• On the right side you find screenshots of Andrea Ghoneim’s group page for her students of Educational Technology (with links to all group portfolios and global feedback) and a table for formative ePortfolio Assessment (the basis – as this is done for MA students is a quite sophisticated matrix of design and content expectations), as was given to the students via the feedback function. Course grading is done via an excel sheet.

• If assessment is done on basis of assessment tools like rubrics: the comments function allows attachments – and these attachments can additionally be saved in the LMS...

N.B.: For those interested in a single sign-on between Moodle and Mahara: Please contact Gregor Pirker (gregor.pirker@donau-uni.ac.at)
A final hint: Watchlist

- Gregor Anželj has designed for ATS2020 a new starting page for Mahara that gives a better overview to teachers. This page will be available with the next upgrade of Mahara, which will be foreseeably at the beginning of November.

- In the meantime, you can add the pages of your students to your „Watchlist“ by clicking the „…“ at the top of the page and then clicking on „add page to watchlist“. (1)

- You can put the block „Watched pages“ on your dashboard (2), but you will also get notification of any changes in „Watched Pages“ into your inbox.

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Eager to know more about feedback in classroom and assessment for learning?

Visit the presentation “Formative Assessment – Scaffolding Tools” by Anastasia Economou at http://mahara.ats2020.eu/view/view.php?id=793. It was held at the ATS2020 partner online meeting on 5 May 2016 and is therefore also available as a video (via Sharepoint).

Some EUfolio resources are a good starting point, as well

Sinéad Tuohy: Prezi for an EUfolio assessment workshop: https://prezi.com/hwv9f3kp3b22/eufolio-assessment-workshop/
