EPORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT OF MASTER STUDENTS’ LEARNING OUTCOMES

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Abstract

This article was prepared in the framework of the project «Actions of Lifelong Learning addressing Multicultural Education and Tolerance in Russia» TEMPUS ALLMEET.

The Russian education system has been in transition from the traditional declarative, knowledge-based approach to an approach with the student at its center, based on the student’s work (student-centered approach) [2, 8, 9]. The focus is not on the teaching, but on the planning of the student’s work, projection of the student’s competence and capabilities by the end of a course or an education program, assessment of professional functions that the student will be able to perform. The main question to the graduate student that is posed by the modern open labor market is: "What can you really do now that you hold a higher education degree?"

The term “learning outcomes” has been widely used by educators. It determines the student’s progress and skills as demonstrated by their achievements and actions in professional settings. Therefore, the concept of “learning outcomes” can be defined as “knowledge, comprehension and skills that students are expected to demonstrate by the end of an instructional process” [4].

Currently, the Russian and foreign educators continue to search for adequate tools of evaluation, to develop such tools and identify opportunities to optimize the system for evaluation of educational activities at various levels.

The technology of the electronic portfolio (e-portfolio) can be readily integrated into the education system at all levels and enables personalization of the educational process, control of professional development, assessment of not only the outcomes of the students graduating from educational institutions in compliance with educational standards, but also the outcomes that are relevant to the subjects of the educational process by means of providing an estimation of the potential development and acquired competencies.

Systemic application of e-portfolios in assessment of learning outcomes of master students allows for a continuous monitoring that demonstrates their level of activity and involvement in the learning, research, project, social, creative and other activities. [7]

The following parameters are viewed as priorities in assessing the learning outcomes of master students in teaching and education: continuity, on-the-job training review, updating and demonstration of the learning outcomes and achievements for different groups in the online mode, feedback to improve the learning process.

The e-portfolio technology has been used by the Institute of Education, Psychology and Sociology of the SFU (IPPS SFU) for over 7 years as one of the focal points of personalization and enhancement of master student training.

At the level of the master’s program in teaching and education the electronic portfolio is used for the following goals of outcome evaluation:

- review of professional practices (the matrix of competence);
- demonstration of term’s projects and presentations to potential employers;
- examination of research based achievement;
- qualification and socio-professional assessment of social competencies.

Incorporation of the e-portfolio technology in educational programs allows master students in teaching and education within the framework of the training course "The portfolio method in higher education" to create personalized e-portfolios on the official website of the Institute [5] and in the Mahara web application [3]. So far, more than 270 personal e-portfolios have been posted on the website of the Institute and more than 120 e-portfolios have been created using the Mahara application. Mahara is a
software environment built on open source providing a social networking facility where users can create and maintain groups of friends within the system.

During the period of training in the institute master students create personal e-portfolios on the website of the Institute. The e-portfolios reflect the outcomes in artifacts of their work (development of classes and presentations). In the e-portfolio review section master students post on-the-job practice reports, photo reports, analyze the level of qualifications by balancing the ratio of self-competence and peer-to-peer evaluation, complete a matrix of competencies on the basis of practical training sessions. An example of the e-portfolio of a master student in teaching and education is shown in Figure 1.

![Example of the e-portfolio of a master student in teaching and education at IPP SFU](image)

**Figure 1**—Example of the e-portfolio of a master student in teaching and education at IPP SFU

Evaluation of the materials in the e-portfolio by teachers and by peers forms the basis for modification of the evaluation procedure, which grows in relevance and meaning to the student. In addition, during the entire period of training in the institute students continue to develop personal e-portfolios, showcasing their learning careers.

The e-portfolio on the IPPS web-site was structured in 2008 [5]. For example, in the Achievements section artifacts of a general nature are posted with further breakdown into the categories of social achievements and scientific achievements. This ensures that the students are socialized within the university’s environment.

Besides the institute maintained e-portfolio, since 2012 IPPS SFU master students in teaching and education can generate their e-portfolios in the Mahara application designed to create the virtual portfolio.

The main advantages of Mahara are as follows:
- free and open resource;
- structured resume;
- free structure of sections;
- opportunity to communicate for members of different groups;
- access for viewing and evaluation of materials.

An example of the e-portfolio of a master student in teaching and education is shown in Figure 2.
Figure 2—Example of the e-portfolio of a IPPC master student in teaching and education in the Mahara application

The features of the IPPS SFU e-portfolios are instrumental in assessment and monitoring of learning outcomes and achievements in the educational and social work of master students during admission and throughout the period of study.

The portfolio-based document contest is held during the admission to the IPPS SFU master’s degree course in teaching. The admission test program lists the criteria of evaluations of specific sections of the portfolio as confirmed by the documents submitted by applicants: diplomas, advanced training certificates, copies of scientific publications, grant awards, etc., thus allowing for assessment of the outcomes acquired by prior learning.

In the framework of the project TEMPUS ALLMEET the scheme of evaluation of the experience of prior learning by means of e-portfolio is presented in figure 3.

**VPL and Formative Approach**

System of valuation & recognition - Stakeholders, instruments

![Diagram of VPL and Formative Approach](image)

Figure 3 — Scheme of assessment of the experience of prior learning by means of e-portfolio [10]
Since 2014 the IPPS SFU has been testing the WordPress environment for e-portfolio and professional areas, but also to create a social networking layer to promote professional communication in an open information space [6].

An example of the e-portfolio developed in WordPress is shown in Figure 4.

![Example e-portfolio](image)

Figure 4 — Example of the section “About Myself” of the e-portfolio of a master student in teaching and education in IPPS SFU using the WordPress

Thus, the e-portfolio is not only an integral part of the educational strategy of a university, but also an important component of its educational environment that enables assessment of the learning outcomes of master students throughout the period of university training and for lifelong learning, non-traditional education and other types of non-formal educational experience, and provides for continuous high-quality monitoring.

REFERENCES


