

Theme 1 – Using your REfLECT Portfolio (warning: these are ideas for quick starting rather than a list of what REfLECT can do)

1. Upload scholarly documents
Reflection is what makes a Portfolio valuable. Find scholarly work that has resonance with your development, upload it and reflect against it. Demonstrate your breadth of reading and thinking as part of your continuing professional development (CPD). Decide who might benefit from reading it along with your attached *thoughts* and *share* it. You may get the favour returned!
 2. Apply for a job
Write a webfolio page describing why you have the attributes for the vacancy. Against each assertion you make *attach an asset* from your portfolio that substantiates the point you make. Include *activities* you have aimed at improvement to demonstrate not only the abilities you have but where you are working to add to your effectiveness. The more *assets* you have the greater the opportunity to explore your suitability. When it is ready, *share* the *webfolio* with the manager concerned.
 3. Add a Photostory to reflect against
If you have lots of images, place them into a Photostory board, edit them and add a narration. Upload the published file to your *Gallery* or point to it if it is sitting on another part of the Internet. The images could be pictures of evidence (activities, documents, live events) as well as illustration (pictures showing what is being described, where the image provides the detail).
 4. Annual Appraisal
Repeat this exercise but make the *webfolio* writing suitable to support your annual appraisal. If you have missed any targets, include an *action plan* to describe how and when you plan to achieve it. *Share* it with your manager. If you have time, *share* it with a trusted colleague for co-mentoring to improve the quality of the content and reflection.
 5. Store Observations
If you are observed by a colleague, *upload* the observation feedback. Reflect against it and share it with a co-mentor. Add a *plan* where appropriate. Use it for a job application or appraisal to show how you are tackling your continuous improvement.
 6. Capture your plaudits
Honest reflection also includes reflecting against your triumphs. Upload them into your portfolio. See if they provide evidence of CPD targets.
 7. Upload Summaries
Look out for anything sent to you that summarises other peoples' views of what you do or are doing. Use them as evidence of meeting *plans* or of professional development.
 8. Take photos of what you do
Pictures and sound files are very effective evidence. Pictures brighten *webfolios* considerably and illustrate what may be a difficult point being captured. *Portfolios* work well with sound, video and pictures.
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Theme 2 - Sharing to improve your content - co-mentoring and critical friendships

9. Share Evaluations Keep a record of any training you attend and complete the evaluation. *Upload* your completed evaluation and then reflect against it. Share it with the training provider. Ask others to share with you where you are the training provider.
 10. If you attend training with a colleague, share thoughts Write a *thought* in your portfolio about any training you have attended and share with any colleague who also attended giving them *collaborative* rights. Each of you can add to the one evaluation and then jointly or privately reflect against it.
 11. Start a subject blog for your group Are you part of a group or perhaps you share a staff room. Start a Section or departmental *blog*. You may be a learning support practitioner and could start a *blog* on supporting learners in class. *Share* with your group colleagues offering *collaborative* rights to it and invite everyone to contribute to the debate. This creates a large central resource against which all in the group can reflect against privately. Make *asset* creation a shared task!
 12. Ask others to share their activity with you Encourage others to *share* their *thoughts*, *experiences*, *activities* and *action plans* with you. With the owner's *permission* and by adding reflection, the *asset* can 'work' for you as well showing collaborative working and cutting down the work of producing original evidence.
 13. Add your targets If you have any *targets* add them to your portfolio. It is very reassuring to see serendipitous adding of assets as subsequently addressing targets where the two events were not necessarily seen. The more *assets* added, the greater the pool of evidence to draw upon to make a point or carry an argument.
 14. Look for themes and directions If you don't know where to start use the *Activity* asset to list everything you have done recently that stands out in your mind. The *Activity* asset was created with the IfL needs in mind. It may help you see a pattern or them or direction. Don't feel it necessary to reflect on every *asset*, nor the need to totally process an *asset*. Add *assets* quickly and then at time intervals look back at what has been added. Look for themes. Look for progressions that may give clues to emerging new directions. An analogy is shaking a bag of bones onto a table and looking for hidden messages. With portfolios, sometimes reflection and insight comes with the bigger picture or after the events recorded.
 15. Upload scholarly documents Reflection is what makes a Portfolio valuable. Find scholarly work that has resonance with your development, upload it and reflect against it. Demonstrate your breadth of reading and thinking as part of your CPD. Decide who might benefit from reading it along with your attached *thoughts* and *share* it. You may get the favour returned!
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Theme 3 - Your private space – your eCPD – some general points

16. It's about you. No-one else. Remember that eCPD has one topic: you. Your portfolio will have only one topic so make sure you are as honest and open with yourself to get the best out of the time and effort you will put into this activity. Share and ask for critical friendship from people you trust and whose opinions you respect in order to improve the quality of your learning journey. For eCPD to take place there has to be purposeful reflection and there should be a sense of satisfaction from a sense that you have successfully addressed the unique conclusions from the training you have done. Good eCPD will be different for everyone, even where people have shared the same experience.
17. Write a plan and reflect against progress Rather than have several plans, try having one only that is a 'Big Plan'. One 'big *plan*' is a good plan! It is perfectly reasonable to reflect against the *plan* content in its own right where it helps improve the content and direction of the *plan*. *Share* it with others to see if they think your choices are sound and, where appropriate, relevant to your employers purposes. This asset will be particularly helpful in mapping your own learning journey and the development of tags will be greatly assisted.
18. Reflection is harder than you think Many times people aspire to reflect but simply end up describing. Reflection requires analysis, an effort to place the analysis in the context of the author, a judgement as to value and a resolution to do something or change something as a result of the conclusion of the analysis. When writing reflectively, read through the text and make sure these elements are present. Remember that any asset that goes into your portfolio should have some connection directly or indirectly to reflection. Practice this by creating a *Thought* using the reflective route as a guide. You could use the *reflective thought*. It will help tease apart the constituent parts of thinking reflectively. Assets should either have direct reflection against it or it illustrates reflection elsewhere. Anything in a portfolio not connected in some form, however tenuous to reflection is wasted.
19. Tagging is for life, not just the course. Think about the big things you want to achieve in your working life. Create say 5 tags to describe them e.g. create a disciplined mind, a creative mind, a set of values, develop respect for others etc. Now every contribution to your portfolio can be taxed to see if it contributes to your bigger life-wide goals and not just your immediate goals. (acknowledgements to Howard Gardner and his '5 minds' ideas.)
20. What's good for IfL... Once you have completed your activity log and summary for IfL, use the same asset as a starting point for your annual appraisal.

20 tips for using REfLECT effectively – 3 themes and 20 ideas to get the best from a personal learning space.

Legend of Portfolio Language

<i>Activity</i>	<i>An asset type available in a portfolio.</i>
<i>Asset</i>	<i>A general phrase used to describe anything created and added to a portfolio because it is valued.</i>
<i>Attach</i>	<i>The process of joining separate assets together around a theme or idea or sequence of developing thinking.</i>
<i>Blog</i>	<i>An online diary for private use or to be shared perhaps in a collaborative way with others.</i>
<i>Collaboration</i>	<i>A right of any asset owner to add the ability to work on an asset with a colleague in a shared space.</i>
<i>Experience</i>	<i>An asset type that is used when wanting to describe an event that is essentially a new or novel experience.</i>
<i>Plan</i>	<i>An asset that allows the writer to set tasks in order with the option of adding waypoints and attaching evidence to illustrate progression</i>
<i>Portfolio</i>	<i>An aggregation of experiences, added as items by the author on the basis that the content is valued for the purpose of reflection, reviewing, sharing and publishing. There are many types of portfolio. Reflect is a reflective portfolio and presentation tool</i>
<i>Permission</i>	<i>The rights assigned by the owner of any asset that are ascribed to any one or group with whom the asset is shared.</i>
<i>Share</i>	<i>The ability to send an asset to a colleague, a group, a library or a website.</i>
<i>Target</i>	<i>One of the settings available in creating an Action Plan</i>
<i>Thought</i>	<i>One of the simplest ways to create an asset, where a simple thought or one more complex as an asset in a portfolio</i>
<i>Webfolio</i>	<i>One or more pages of writing. Attached to the writing is the aggregation of selected assets by hyperlink to form a body of writing around a theme, pitch or case.</i>