



JISC RSC Scotland South & West Case Study @ Cumbernauld College

Immersive Use of Mahara for Creative Industry Courses

Background to this case study and about the institution

Cumbernauld College offers a range of vocational programmes from HN through to degree level, catering for subjects such as business, environmental sciences and creative industries. The college has two campuses, one situated in Cumbernauld town centre, and one in East Dunbartonshire.

The College's Creative Industries department offers courses covering television, film and sound production. In 2009, the department chose to introduce the open source e-portfolio system, Mahara, to the HNC Creative Industries television course. Taking an immersive approach, all teaching, learning and assessment would take place within Mahara, creating a learning and assessment hub where students could upload, submit and archive their work and lecturers could teach, mark and provide feedback.



The Challenge

Throughout their studies, Creative Industries students produce media-rich work, including video, audio and images, which prior to the introduction of Mahara, were stored in folders on shared drives. These were stored as flat files which meant the material students were producing was not showcased in anyway and they could not easily link content together to demonstrate influences or connections between theory and practice.

Prior to 2009, assessment submissions were also submitted in paper copy, with media work uploaded as individual files to the Content Management System, Moodle. Lecturers were responsible for storing vast quantities of important assessment evidence, which led to logistical difficulties with storage and security. So in 2009-10 the college ran a pilot with the Mahara e-portfolio system to investigate the opportunities it might offer for better supporting and storing the types of content students were producing and as a platform for formative and summative assessment.

The Activity

The department felt that an e-Portfolio would be better suited to showcasing television students' work and for submitting the types of assessment undertaken, so they took the decision to use a Mahara immersion approach with the students. Teaching, learning, formative and summative assessments all now take place through Mahara. Learners have full control of their Mahara profile and the content they display. Students can join a class group, choose what material they release in a 'view' for assessment submission, leave feedback on each other's views, post to forums, leave messages on a friend's wall, embed video content from sites such as Youtube, display RSS feeds and upload their CV. The lecturers have found

that, on the whole, students have taken well to this way of working with content, which they attribute to the students' generally high level of experience using social networking tools such as Facebook or Twitter.

Students are assessed on each individual module in the course and gather and submit content as a Mahara 'view' for the module. A 'view' essentially presents a dedicated grouping of material from the e-Portfolio, which can include files, images, video, blogs, links and so on. Students release the view to teaching staff and can also release it to their peers for feedback. When submitted for assessment, views are locked (meaning the student can no longer edit any of the content) until released by the lecturer or in the case of summative assessment, they will no longer be open for editing by the student.

The Outcomes

Introducing the e-Portfolio system across all groups within the Creative Industries has enabled all learners to receive access to additional online resources such as class tutorials, course overviews and forums. Students now have the ability to showcase their practice online and archive their work. Mahara allows the students to easily play media content within a centralised area, demonstrate their influences through linking different material, display a range of feeds, media and files and easily chart where they are on their learning journey.

The e-portfolio hub is designed to document the life of the learner and to show progression from NC to Degree level in line with the courses on offer at Cumbernauld College. Students can see where they are in terms of the outcomes within individual courses but also as they progress through a number of courses and as such, have more control over their learning and how they are progressing.

Before you get started...

[Introduction to Mahara](#)



Currently reading... Bill Drummond "45"

Currently listening to... Was (not Was) First album

TV Modules UCAS

HND Creat...ries.doc
23KB | Thursday, 25 November 2010 | Details

CCTV

[CCTV on Youtube](#)

[CCTV on Vimeo](#)

My Views

Introduction to AVID

A comprehensive guide to getting started on AVID Media Composer

Tags: AVID, Editing

Artefacts: AVID

Blah Blah Blah

Confessions of a justified sinner

Artefacts: (E)logit!, A squid eating dough in a p..., Balmaha, Balmahara, Documentary Research 02/09/..., DISC03265.JPG, Duty of Care, Eblao Mindrick, Granny Cloud, History rewrites itself, If it ain't broke, is the internet a good thing?, James Blunt, John Grant, Old dad, Opinions, Philosophy in Primary Schools, Restoring the faith, Some learners will. Some . . ., The 10 Rules of Mahara, The End of

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The latest stories from the Entertainment & Arts section of the BBC News web site.

1. Cowell quits as weekly UK judge
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Education and Technology News

Scotedublogs RSS Feed

A feed of posts all blogs in the Scotedublogs site.

Blog Books

Blog Book

Work experience Pictures At The Glasgow Science Centre

Here are some pictures I took when I did my work experience at the Inno Theatre in the Glasgow Science Centre. The young ones probably are glad as the camera is put back in my pocket and also the signing in the books is quite good so I hope to be back quite soon and also I got some insight to some of the equipment I was working with through.

Posted by Ashley O'Hare on 22 March 2011, 8:52 PM

Team Work Experience

Recently we have had to work on a team to deliver ideas for a college and my video. We pitched our ideas last week which was a success and now we are starting to film them. I have been left in charge of creating a studio in my room which will be used in the film. I am to start this today and I hope it goes well as my knowledge of music is not very basic but I suppose the best way to learn is to work with the programme. I am looking forward to the film being shown as I think and hope it will be a success if the story shows good team work and work together well.

Posted by Ashley O'Hare on 22 March 2011, 8:23 PM

Quick Note about Monday

It came to my attention that Monday was a bit hectic as maybe in future the hobby would give people a better chance to do their assignments without having to rush.

Posted by Ashley O'Hare on 18 March 2011, 12:10 PM

Nobby Gig

My gig at the hobby on Saturday went really well. We had a good gig to the point that I had a great success. I was lucky to get a gig to the point that I had a great success. I was lucky to get a gig to the point that I had a great success.

The gig lasted about 30 min and we had a great time. I was lucky to get a gig to the point that I had a great success. I was lucky to get a gig to the point that I had a great success.

On Monday we filmed at the awards ceremony. I was lucky to get a gig to the point that I had a great success. I was lucky to get a gig to the point that I had a great success.

Posted by Ashley O'Hare on 18 March 2011, 12:09 PM

Adverts



More Reels



A significant benefit of using the system has been the opportunities for rich feedback. When students submit a view for assessment, they can submit this to their peers as well as to teaching staff. They will receive feedback from their lecturer, which other lecturers might add to, as well as from their peers and the student can also respond to any of this feedback, seek clarification, argue a point and so on. This 'feedback conversation' enables a deep level of engagement with the feedback and different points of view. Students are encouraged to approach the

feedback they receive in a mature fashion and learn to accept and work with constructive criticism. As the feedback is also stored in the central location, a significant benefit is the ability to refer back to previous feedback and to access any links, information or media the lecturer has suggested they look at to support their development.

Lecturers have noticed students working on their e-portfolio at weekends and evenings and are pleased with the level of engagement with the system amongst students. The department promotes the approach that learning does not stop upon leaving campus and they encourage students to reflect on their learning while undertaking their own work.

As a result of the success of the pilot, the college will be rolling out the immersive use of Mahara across the department to media, photography and sound production courses.

Lessons Learnt

The response from both staff and students in the Mahara immersion pilot has been positive although not every lecturer engaged with the project, and this led to some disparity of provision for students and the students having differing perceptions about what was expected of them. The transparency of the system may also prove daunting or problematic for some. In the pilot, not everyone felt at ease with posting class notes online or providing access to their material to peers, so it may be that additional support and training would be required to help staff and students feel comfortable with this.

Overall, the main recommendation from the departmental lead on the project, Alan Moffat, is to sell it! Focus on the benefits for students and staff and understand that it will take some time to become embedded and for everyone to become comfortable with the new approach.

Useful Links

Cumbernauld College: <http://www.cumbernauld.ac.uk/>

Creative Industries Department, Cumbernauld College:
<https://apply.cumbernauld.ac.uk/website/onlineservices/results.aspx>

Mahara: <http://mahara.org/>