

## E portfolio

Centre of Flexible Learning, CFL, is the provider of adult education in the municipality of Söderhamn. In the middle of November 2005 we were asked to join a meeting in Bologna, arranged by the Osmosys project, see: <http://www.eife-l.org/activities/projects/osmosys>.

During the meeting the coordinator of the project, Mr Carl Holmberg, from the National Centre of Flexible Learning in Sweden and Mr Serge Ravet from the EIFEL organisation in France, informed all partners about digital portfolio, or e-portfolio. The following definition comes from Wikipedia and teaches us what e-portfolio can contain:

*An **electronic portfolio**, also known as an **e-portfolio** or **digital portfolio**, is a collection of electronic evidence assembled and managed by a user, usually on [the Web](#) (also called [Webfolio](#)). Such electronic evidence may include inputted text, electronic files, images, [multimedia](#), [blog](#) entries, and [hyperlinks](#). E-portfolios are both demonstrations of the user's abilities and platforms for self-expression, and, if they are online, they can be maintained dynamically over time. Some e-portfolio applications permit varying degrees of audience access, so the same portfolio might be used for multiple purposes.*

*An e-portfolio can be seen as a type of learning record that provides actual evidence of achievement. Learning records are closely related to the [Learning Plan](#), an emerging tool that is being used to manage learning by individuals, teams, [communities of interest](#), and organizations. To the extent that a [Personal Learning Environment](#) captures and displays a learning record, it also might be understood to be an electronic portfolio.*

*E-portfolios, like traditional [portfolios](#), can facilitate students' reflection on their own learning, leading to more awareness of learning strategies and needs. Results of a comparative research between paper based portfolios and electronic portfolios in the same setting, suggest use of an electronic portfolio leads to better learning outcomes.*

Mr Håkan Helmersson, teacher in mathematics and very experienced in distance- and blended learning took notice of the information and together with Mr Dan Jonsson, head of adult education in Söderhamn , he started to plan for an implementation of E-portfolio at CFL.

At first we focused on non-national students who were studying Swedish for Immigrants, SFI. We also planned to include students at the Health Care Programme at upper secondary level to join the course in E-portfolio. We soon detected problems in finding good facilities on the Web. It was difficult for the students to log in and the teachers complained that a lot of time was spent on technical problems instead of pedagogical work. We had to find a better and easier way of using the digital portfolio if we seriously meant to implement and develop an E-portfolio that was accepted and useful at our adult learning centre. The solution so far is to provide the students with a USB-MEMORY, a so called a USB-stick. By training the immigrants, at a very early stage, in using the computer we have accomplished spin-off effects such as better spelling and increased motivation. After a period of basic computer training many of the students will be able to save their texts, digital photos, certificates of earlier education from their homelands and also write and present their CVs. So far we have

achieved modest results, but we know that development is a long term job, so therefore we feel confident that the e-portfolio will benefit our students.

A very promising way of using e-portfolio is developed by one of the teachers, Charlotta Lindekrans. She has built a system of folders on the USB-stick. Her students - who all start from a position as being illiterates - have made fast progress in learning how to read and write. In the folders the students can - from a very basic level - develop their life stories, establish a CV, scan their adequate documents and certificates, publish digital photos, show the progression in their studies, future plans, and etcetera. The students benefit very much from working a lot with their laptops or computers and they can develop their own e-portfolios and they can easily follow the progression of their learning.