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Wooff, David and Bell, D (2011) Development of an electronic resource (e-portfolio) used to support trainee teachers in providing outstanding evidence in pursuit of Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). In: Second TEAN Conference; The Importance of Education, 20th May 2011, Manchester Conference Centre. (Unpublished)

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Development of an electronic resource (e-portfolio) used to support trainee teachers in providing outstanding evidence in pursuit of Qualified Teacher Status (QTS).

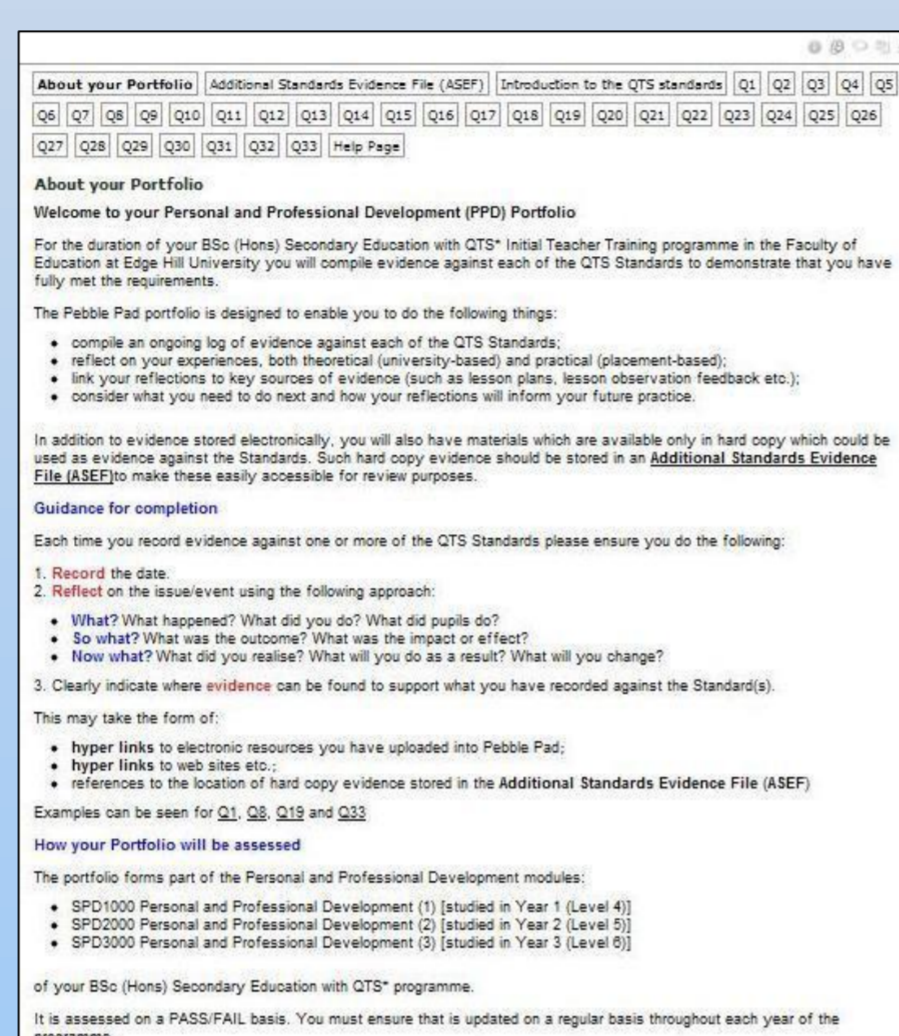
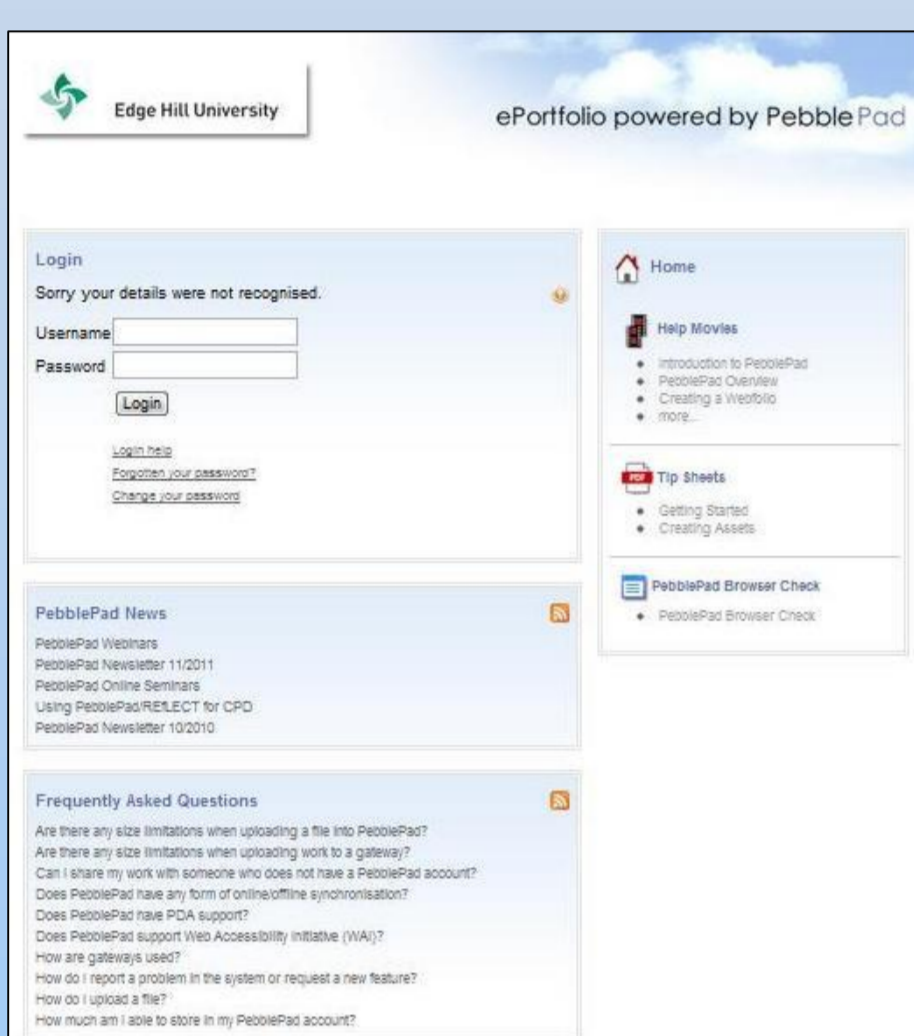
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Edge Hill University

Introduction

The research presented here will illustrate how senior lecturers working within Secondary Education at Edge Hill University have devised an electronic resource (in the form of an e-portfolio) to provide support enabling trainees to produce high quality evidence necessary to demonstrate their competence against the standards relating to achieving Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). This research builds on work previously reported at the first Teacher Education Advancement Network (TEAN) conference at Glasgow Caledonian University in 2010.



Literature Review

As previously reported, (Wooff and Bell 2010), the Training and Development Agency (TDA) for schools, produces a variety of information to support trainees in demonstrating their ability to meet the standards for Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). These are published on the TDA website and detail, in a narrative fashion, evidence that can be used in support of trainees meeting the standards. This information was published on the TDA website in November 2007. Other English institutions such as: Bath University and Brunel University produce and publish lists which can be used by their trainees as simple checklists to help trainees gather evidence for their professional portfolios. The TDA itself does not publish nor endorse such lists of material. Consequently, the relevant literature that exists considers development of e-portfolio's in general.

Discussion

This phase of the work presented here is very much in its infancy. Consequently, there is very little qualitative data available from which to draw any meaningful conclusions to date. As this is a new initiative, its progress will be charted and monitored, data will be collected and analysed subsequent to the completion of the final cohort.

Evidence gathered so far indicates that there is a mixed response to this method of assembling a portfolio of work to demonstrate that one has met the standards necessary for the award of QTS. Some of the abridged comments from users regarding this initiative are captured below:



"I like the use of an electronic portfolio, this means I can simply upload my lesson plans, resources, schemes of work and other things which I have written whilst on my teaching practice. The only problem that I find is having to scan stuff in like lesson observations and minutes from meetings. I have to do this at school as I haven't got a scanner at home – I suppose it means I just have to be more organised."



"The idea is good, but I like having a folder I can look through. I know that it's a pain to carry around at times but it does mean that I can easily get to things without having to get to a PC. I tend to have a poor internet connection at home so find it awkward to use, it often freezes or I loose connection for a bit and can't access it, personally I'd rather use a folder."



"I know that some of my classmates don't like it, but I think its really good. I don't scan things though, that would be hard going, instead I take photo's on my phone and bluetooth them to my PC and upload them. I've tried scanning, but this is quicker. I also like that I don't have folders to carry and I can access this from anywhere with an internet connection"

Methodology

A commercially available software package, (PebblePad,) was utilised to run and host the e-portfolio developed to aid trainees in the pursuit of achieving "outstanding " status. Once the user has logged on to their secure workspace they are faced with a simple front page listing all of the QTS standards and some brief explanatory notes. There are also some links basic self-help files and documentation to aid the user in completing their portfolio.

The methodology adopted in this work is that of a piece of on going action research, originating from work initially analysed and presented as a case study (Wooff and Bell 2010). It is evident that the supporting documentation produced from this work is organic in nature and it will continue to evolve over time as more trainees complete their studies and provide yet further suitable evidence in pursuit of the standards for QTS. Further, it will be possible to evaluate the full effectiveness and impact of this form of evidence collation after completion by the current cohort of trainee teachers undertaking their relevant Initial Teacher Training (ITT) course .

"Secondary NQTs rated the overall quality of assessment and feedback they received, and support and guidance they received to achieve the standards for QTS, higher than in the previous survey"

http://www.tda.gov.uk/upload/resources/pdf/r/results_nqt_survey09.pdf

