WELCOME!

We’re pleased to share that the PLE is up and running. Users can login with Pheme username and password as we head into finalising training and support to staff and students across six Courses.

This edition includes:

- **Implementation news**
  - Update on progress of implementation of UWA’s PLE
  - Plans for 2014
- **User news**
  - Initial courses using PLE in 2014
  - Snapshot of three Courses using PLE
- **Functionality news**
  - New feature and enhancements in January upgrade
  - Did you know: Digital Signature in PebblePad
- **Community news**
  - PLE events at UWA and other events in Australia
  - Contact details for PLE queries at UWA
- **Case Study**
  - Using PLE for creating a professional portfolio in Nursing.

IMPLEMENTATION NEWS

PLE is ready to use

By **24th January**, we had

- A **secure PLE hosted** by the vendor, Pebble Learning
- A **UWA URL** providing direct link to the PLE login page
- **Pheme** integration
- A **branding** element post login
- Staff and student **training planned**
- Staff **support ready** in CATL
- Student support ready via Information Services

On **28th January**, 240 students from our first implementation group – the new Doctor of Medicine course commenced using PLE as a core learning system. This group has been supported by the FMDHS Education Centre.
Plans for 2014

February

The CATL eLearning PLE team is preparing and supporting new staff users of PLE, and planning for student initial demonstration training.

Across 2014

CATL provides on-going support, guidance, technical resolutions and system upgrades, and has these additional focuses:

1. Monitoring LTI integration development by Pebble Learning. LTI will allow a seamless link between our LMS and the PLE.
2. Supporting new approved users of PLE in using the system as well as implementing it across the course
3. Providing demonstrations to curious and interested staff
4. Establish user group with monthly sharing and development

For guidelines in preparing a business case, please contact help-elearning@uwa.edu.au

USER NEWS

The text box above on the right lists all initial Courses of PLE for 2014. Courses can still apply to integrate PLE across the curriculum commencing semester 2, 2014 or the next trimester. Please contact help-eLearning@uwa.edu.au to enquire.

Snapshots of three Courses using PLE

**Doctor of Medicine**
Longitudinal integrated learning and assessment. Students collect and reflect on evidence from studies and clinical experiences to demonstrate achievements of criteria against standards of the Australian Medical Council, and are assessed periodically. They are provided with a list of criteria for which evidence is to be documented.

**GradDip Education**
Students develop a professional portfolio across the GradDip that reflects the WA College of Teachers’ standards and criteria. The themes are to develop as reflective practitioners with activities selecting and reflecting on their work and teaching experiences, and to develop skills in using ICTs in educating.

**Bachelor of Philosophy**
Students will document and reflect on activities and experiences as developing researchers, and share ideas and experiences with peers and academic mentors. Level 1 students will collect, document, reflect on class work and links with wider research world. Level 2 & 3 students keep a research journal and develop a CV, including skill development.

FUNCTIONALITY NEWS

New features and enhancements in January upgrade

Pebble Learning carries out regular upgrades to PebblePad. The upgrade in mid-January includes new features and enhancements on PebblePad such as

- HTML accessibility updates
- digital signatures* [see description next page]
- workbook adaptive page release.

Information is provided here: [http://preview.tinyurl.com/pebblepadv1.3releasenotes](http://preview.tinyurl.com/pebblepadv1.3releasenotes).
**Did you know? Digital signature in PebblePad**

**What is it?**
Digital signature allows a tutor or assessor to 'sign' a student's form response, thus verifying its content.

**What's its educational application?**
It can be used by students on practicum experiences to get signature of a supervisor when they complete a task or meet a competency.

**On what devices does it work?**
It works on mobile devices, and works best with a touchscreen device.

**How does it work?**

1. In Pebble+ go to Tools & Resources > Template builder > Advanced tab
2. Select the signature icon, and follow the prompts to name, add time stamp and printed name if required.
3. When student selects the signature element, it will take them to a separate HTML page where they can add a signature with stylus or finger.
4. It is automatically added to the template or form.

**Reference for further information**

A how-to and demonstration by Pebble Learning:
https://www.pebblepad.co.uk/pp3help/video/digitalsignatures/digitalsignatures.htm

A sample use in an academic context:

**COMMUNITY NEWS**

**PLE events**

**Mid March 2014**
**UWA PLE launch**
A PLE launch for reference group, pilot users, and other key staff will be held, in a joint event with other eLearning initiatives in March – contact catl@uwa.edu.au for further details.

**Late March 2014**
**UWA PLE Users’ Gathering**
Beginning end March 2014, this group is to share ideas, solutions to pedagogical dilemmas, uses of PLE, updates on upgrades in PLE, needs of the system, and case studies of approaches. Open to anyone, initial invites will be sent to the current staff users and others who have expressed interest. Contact: Andrew.hu@uwa.edu.au.

**14-16 April 2014**
**PebbleBash**
The PebblePad software conference will be held at Grange Cleveland Winery, Lancefield, Victoria. http://www.pebblebash.co.uk/2014/

**1st-2nd Oct 2014**
**ePortfolios Australia Forum**
The Australian ePortfolio professional network’s annual two day forum is held at La Trobe university. [http://eportfoliosaustralia.wordpress.com/forums/2014-eportfolio-forum-home-page/](http://eportfoliosaustralia.wordpress.com/forums/2014-eportfolio-forum-home-page/)

**Contact details**

Contact email help-elearning@uwa.edu.au or ext. 8190 for

- Staff support and queries on PLE
- demonstration of PLE
- guidelines on preparing business case for applying to be an approved user of PLE for your course/major
**CASE STUDY**
**Using PLE for creating a showcase portfolio in Nursing**

**CONTEXT**
PLE was used in a capstone unit in the Master of Nursing Science. 34 students were enrolled. Students developed an ePortfolio to demonstrate achievement against professional body competency standards. Staff decided to trial the use of an ePortfolio, rather than paper-based documents, so that students had the ability to develop a professional looking portfolio and share work with their academic supervisor (and possibly potential employers).

**LEARNER ACTIVITY**
Students were asked to submit a final portfolio that incorporates all aspects of their educational experience across their degree studies, including:
- records of clinical practice placements and reflection on each
- evidence-based achievement of ANMC (Australian Nursing and Midwifery Council) competency standards, and a reflection on the ANMC domains
- a plan for post-graduation continuing professional development

The portfolio was worth 50% of the final grade.

**FEATURES OF PLE USED**

**Webfolio:**
Students were provided with a sample webfolio, and could add this sample portfolio to their own Pebble+ space, add their own detail, and then customize the look.

**EXPERIENCE**
This implementation plan focused on attempting the use of the system with the least amount of impact on student workload in terms of technical competency with the system. Students had at the very least only to change details on their copied sample webfolio, and had the potential if desired to personalize it further, which they did.

In a focus interview, one student evaluated her experiences holistically:

“I enjoyed using the PebblePad+ format. Once I was able to understand the platform I found compiling the portfolio simple. Using an online portfolio as a student means that going into my nursing career my organisation of professional documents will already have begun and will be easy to continue. Putting all this information into one place has highlighted what I have achieved over the past two years. At times the limitations of PebblePad+ were frustrating (limited formatting, unable to export as an editable document), however the ease of use, and key features (such as ability to view different media files, and the auto spell check!), more than made up for this.”

Students were able to create ePortfolios as envisaged and required for their course assessment. However, the low level of submission requirements and the fact that students had to collate documents from all prior units of study, meant a less favourable implementation. Most respondents (86%; n=7) agreed that PebblePad met the unit’s purpose or required use. The overall response was that only 43% agreed that they found PebblePad easy to use and 43% recommended that UWA acquire PebblePad as an ePortfolio system for teaching and learning purposes. Most students encountered technical difficulties (86%) with the main problems being the slowness of the system and formatting/display issues, as well as general lack of understanding of the system. In the general feedback, students complained about the amount of time required to scan evidence from previous units.

This implementation and outcomes provide valuable information regarding characteristics of successful implementation of a PLE where the outcome is a professional portfolio demonstrating the achievement of professional standards.

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**CASE STUDY SYNOPSIS**
An application of PebblePad as part of the pilot phase carried out during semester 2, 2013.

Key learning included:
- The value of commencing collection of evidence from the start of the course
- Providing a customisable sample enables less confident students to achieve and reduces cognitive load on technology rather than professional standards
- Having samples for both staff and student learning enables better understanding of potential uses
- Formative assessments over time will better support student confidence, acceptance of tool, and outcomes
- On-going opportunities for students to seek help is important.

Teaching staff: Assoc/Prof David Stanley
CATL Ed Developer: Astrid Davine
Other support: FMDHS Education Centre