Mahara and reflection to illustrate development of graduate attributes (LTDF)

Gordon Curry, Dickon Copsey, Jamie Wightwick, Craig Brown, Lance Voute, Robert Croudace, Susan Deeley, Sally-Ann Coupar, Stephen Woodruff, James Harrison, Louisa Campbell (pg Co-ordinator)

[Four Colleges, SRC, L&T Centre, Careers Service]
Mahara

“open-source electronic portfolio (e-portfolio) and social networking web application”
Mahara Used for:

- Graduate Skills Programme
- Assessed reflective Diaries
- Credit-bearing Team Projects
- Specific Employment Opportunities

- > 10,000 registered users in University of Glasgow
Not used for:-

• Independent
  – e-portfolios
  – CV preparation
  – Reflection

  – *Can be private, but little evidence of Mahara being used in this way*
Project designed to produce

- Outline templates
- Sample e-portfolios from templates, prepared by students
- **E-portfolio templates**, available to all students and staff

- Introduction to e-portfolios and reflection

- Preparation for use of Professional Networks (“Linked In”)
How

- **Staff Steering Group**
- **Postgraduate Co-ordinator (Louisa Campbell)**
  - Worked with subset of steering group to define requirements & produce outline templates
- **Students from all Colleges**
  - Trained by Postgraduate Co-ordinator
  - Feedback
  - Produced e-portfolios
  - E-portfolio templates
Project Template Components

- Graduate Attributes Table
- Graduate Attributes Evidence
- Graduate Attributes – Documentary Evidence
- Graduate Attributes – Personal Development Plan
- Graduate Attributes – Reflective Learning

- Web layout – with index ‘landing page’
- Flexible
### MVLS Student 1 - Graduate Attributes Table

#### Graduate Attribute

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attribute Dimensions</th>
<th>Activity Where Skill Was Developed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Effective Communicator</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic - Articulate complex ideas with respect to the needs and abilities of diverse audiences.</td>
<td>As part of an animal welfare course I took during my undergraduate degree in animal biology, I prepared a 23 page paper which discussed the welfare and ethical issues surrounding the use of genetically modified animals. The project also involved other forms of media which were geared towards various audiences, including a media site and an oral presentation given to classmates and course instructors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal - Present ideas clearly and concisely in high quality written and spoken English.</td>
<td>I am frequently elected as a spokesperson by my peers when involved in small group class discussions. In this role I am able to convey our derived solutions to complicated situational problems in a clear and concise manner while maintaining the attention of the broader audience of colleagues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transferable - Communicate clearly and confidently, and behave and negotiate effectively with others.</td>
<td>Through my employment as a veterinary technician I have developed excellent communication skills with clients regarding treatment plans and discharge instructions for their animals. While working at Banfield pet hospital as part of a student job program in the summer of 2011 I received on several occasions, positive verbal feedback from clients on my professional interactions with them.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Subject Specialist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attribute Dimensions</th>
<th>Activity Where Skill Was Developed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic - Understand and respect the values, principles, methods and limitations of a discipline.</td>
<td>As an active member of the veterinary school’s Clinical Club, I am a regular attendee at extracurricular lectures on a broad range of topics. I am also involved in events hosted by the Veterinary Pathology Club and Zoological Society which inform and deepen my understanding on a wide range of topics pertaining to veterinary medicine. Recently I attended a talk by one of the UK’s leading veterinary pathologists dealing with exotic species found in zoos and aquariums.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal - Possess a breadth and depth of knowledge within disciplinary area(s).</td>
<td>While I majored in Animal Biology during my previous Bachelor of Science degree I embraced the opportunity to enroll in many elective courses covering a range of topics including: computer science, programming, German language studies, classical history, philosophy and creative writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transferable - Possess discipline-relevant professional skills, knowledge and competencies.</td>
<td>I am actively involved in the veterinary and professional clinical skills course encompassed within the BVMS curriculum. Activities on this course have provided me the opportunity to practice and perfect relevant skills that I have subsequently used with great success in my work experience placements at a wide range of different veterinary practices. For instance, my training in obtaining a clinical history from veterinary clients has proven invaluable in conducting consults during my work placement at the PDSA.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Attribute – Academic, Personal, Transferable
Science and Engineering Student 1 - Graduate Attributes evidence

Sam Cox: Graduate Attributes Evidence

Example 1

Graduate Attributes evidenced: Effective Communicator; Committed; Resourceful and Responsible; Subject Specialist; Experienced Collaborator.

Throughout my university career I have acquired a strong set of Graduate Attributes. Through presenting seminars on a wide range of topics as well as group projects, class discussions, presentations and report writing I have become an effective communicator as well as gaining confidence. I was awarded joint marks for my undergraduate dissertation which incorporated an in-depth report and seminar presentation. I have also produced posters and summaries of complex scientific papers aimed at school children which have further enhanced my communication skills. I have learned to be resourceful and take advantage of opportunities out with the core requirements for my degree course. For example, I have actively pursued opportunities to interact with and interview industry experts for project research and am comfortable in approaching members of departmental staff for guidance and to engage in detailed discussion about my research.

Though studying Earth Sciences I have gained knowledge in a wide range of subjects, however, the most specialised skill I have acquired, unique to Earth Science/Geology, is geological mapping. Participating in several residential fieldtrips has further contributed to my subject specialism and allowed me to expand my expertise in the geology of the Western Isles of Scotland. I have also, however, gained invaluable experiences which is applicable and transferrable to any geological setting. During fieldtrips I have been granted unsupervised access to protected areas of geology, which required a high degree of responsibility and respect for the geological and country codes at all times.

Fieldtrips have also enabled me to develop excellent teamwork skills as well as the opportunity to engage with group projects and problem solving. I have been able to work closely with my colleagues and also members of the department to become an experienced collaborator, for example in my honours lab project. The aim of this project is to conduct research in a chosen field and, with the help of my supervisor, plan a strategy to carry this out. I also have the privilege to use very important and specialised analytical equipment which again requires a high degree of responsibility and trust. This has given me the ability to listen to and learn from others’ points of view and knowledge as well as gaining the confidence to maintain my own opinions.

Example 2

Graduate Attributes evidenced: Investigative; Independent and Critical Thinker; Adaptable; Ethically and Socially Aware; Reflective Learner

Throughout my time at the University of Glasgow, I have submitted many assignments and assessments following strict imposed deadlines. These range from essays and reports to online assessments and posters. As an independent researcher my undergraduate dissertation involved an analysis of the Arctic and the Arctic. All of these activities have required an investigative attitude and extended research as well as effective time management and organisation skills. My undergraduate dissertation also allowed me to develop skills as an independent thinker as it required 2 weeks of mapping research without any lecturer input. This allowed me to critically assess evidence and develop my own theories and interpretations of the surrounding geology and to ultimately produce a geological map. My skills as a critical thinker have been further developed through this research and also through evidence and critical evaluation of scientific work and journals throughout my university career. I have demonstrated adaptability through the study of a variety of subjects as well as in creating objectives and plans for my own research and managing these where problems are encountered. I have also worked in a variety of environments from bars and restaurants to office and cafe, demonstrating my ability to work in any role in any situation.

Studying geography has also made me ethically and socially aware with respect to human geography, where a wide range of social and political issues were raised. I studied globalisation in detail and learned about human geographies as well as the physical processes linked to these such as climate change and sustainability. I have also gained a thorough understanding of environmental science throughout my university career and its implications on a global scale.

I am developing my skills as a reflective learner through my participation in the Mahara e-portfolio project which requires me to construct example e-portfolios to encourage University of Glasgow students to find effective ways to articulate their graduate attributes. This has allowed me to critically assess my time at university and the positiv skills I have acquired as well as reflect on areas I can develop further as part of my Personal Development Plan.
Example of Graduate Attributes - Documentary evidence

This section contains documentary evidence of the Graduate Attributes that I have highlighted in my Graduate Attributes Table and Graduate Attributes Evidence sections and which I have developed over the course of my academic studies, work experience and extra-curricular activities. It includes academic assignments, research projects, business reports, and business consultancy projects that I have produced or been involved in.

**Business report**

- Example B...port.doc
  - 23.5KB | Thursday, 28 October 2010 | Details

**Business consultancy project**

- Example B...port.doc
  - 23.5KB | Thursday, 28 October 2010 | Details

**Group powerpoint presentation**

- Example C...tion.doc
  - 23.5KB | Thursday, 28 October 2010 | Details

**Extended research project**

- Example E...ect.doc
  - 23.5KB | Thursday, 28 October 2010 | Details
Social Science Student 2 - Graduate Attributes e-portfolio

Why Mahara?

About me

My name is xxx and I have recently completed an MSc in Finance Risk Management at the University of Glasgow having achieved a good Class 2:1 Honours degree in Accounting and Finance from the University of Glasgow. I went on to do my Masters Programme where I did a dissertation on VaR in Eastern Europe. In the framework of recent research surrounding the 2008 economic crisis and risk models, the research explored the methodologies that would favour this index of risk over varying following their individual performance after the crisis. This was done under the supervision of Dr. Ogra Forooha, a senior lecturer in finance at the Management School of the University of Liverpool with a published series of papers in international peer reviewed academic journals.

This e-portfolio reflects on and includes the Graduate Attributes I have developed during the academic studies, work-related learning and extra-curricular activities that I have been involved in.

ePortfolio contents

This page contains the following elements:
1. Graduate Attributes Table: A list of the key academic, personal and transferable attributes developed through my academic studies, professional career and extra-curricular activities.
2. Graduate Attributes Evidence: Detailed examples and evidence of the attributes I have developed through my academic studies, professional career and extra-curricular activities.
3. Graduate Attributes - Documentary evidence: An archive of documents and assignments which evidence particular skills and competencies relating to my Graduate Attributes Table.
4. Graduate Attributes - Personal Development Plan: A list of all activities (including academic, personal and extra-curricular) that I have completed (or plan to complete) and which have contributed to my development of my Graduate Attributes. (This section is currently under construction).

Interview tips

1. What was the point of GAs?

There are many benefits such as developing different elements during my time in university that carry into the various requirements needed by employers. Also, the identification of the skills needed to be a strong candidate for the workplace as well as the development of each skill for example, presentation skills, ability to think critically and effectively, teamwork skills and leadership skills.

The biggest challenges are perhaps thinking of how to relate the many experiences gained through university to the graduate attributes. Also, not being very repetitive in the examples of how I have developed certain attributes. These graduate attributes are very similar and it is very frustrating to select one example more than once. Lastly, because I did Economics, it was not appealing to demonstrate economic ability and hence heavily presented skills developed through extra-curricular activities along with academic strengths.

I would advise all students to start building a Mahara view because it is a very helpful tool when they decide...
Ezra Student 1 - Graduate Attributes e-portfolio

This page contains the following elements:

1. Graduate Attributes Table: A list of the key academic, personal and transferable attributes developed through my academic studies, professional career and extra-curricular activities.

2. Graduate Attributes Evidence: Detailed examples and evidence of the attributes I have developed through my academic studies, professional career and extra-curricular activities.

3. Graduate Attributes - Documentary evidence: An archive of documents and assignments which evidence particular skills and competencies relating to my Graduate Attributes Table.

What Was the Point of GAs?

Engaging with the Graduate Attributes allowed me to reflect on my experiences in light of their key advantages, and it afforded me the opportunity to integrate some of my academic, fieldwork and employment experience in light of what I have gained from them - both as a person and as a specialist in my chosen area of study.

Reflective learning is a useful way of maximising the benefit of your time at university. It is both retrospective, and forward-looking: it is about selecting aspects of past experience, and using this to more effectively shape the future.

1. Graduate Attributes table

In the course of my studies and through engagement with extra-curricular activities and work experience, I have developed a range of academic, personal and transferable skills. I have listed these skills in the Graduate Attributes Table below.

View personal Graduate Attributes table

For detailed examples of how and where I have developed and demonstrated these skills see the Graduate Attributes Evidence section on this page.

2. Graduate Attribute Evidence

During the course of my undergraduate degree I have participated in a range of projects which have involved interacting both with professionals in my field, other students, and the general public. This has enabled me to develop my interpersonal skills and build upon my existing ability to effectively communicate with a wide range of people developed through extensive customer-service experience prior to attending university. I have also been able to reflect upon the ethical and social implications of the place of my specialist subject of archaeology within wider society (continued)

3. Graduate Attributes - Documentary evidence

This section contains documentary evidence of the Graduate Attributes that I have highlighted in my Graduate Attributes Table and which that I have developed over the course of my academic studies, work experience and extra-curricular activities. It includes academic assignments, research projects, presentations and employment feedback (more)
Arts Student 3 - Graduate Attributes E-portfolio

**60 Second blog**

E-Portfolio

This is a project I am involved in for the University of Glasgow.

The purpose of this project to create an E-Portfolio to demonstrate my Graduate Attributes and for my E-portfolio to serve as an example for future users to consider when making their own E-Portfolios.

**Resources**

Graduate Attributes Table

Graduate Attributes Evidence

**ePortfolio contents**

1. Graduate Attributes Table: A list of key academic, personal and transferable attributes developed through my academic studies, professional career and extra-curricular activities.

2. Graduate Attributes Evidence: Detailed examples and evidence of the attributes I have developed through my academic studies, professional career and extra-curricular activities.

3. Graduate Attributes - Documentary evidence: An archive of documents and assignments which evidence particular skills and competencies relating to my Graduate Attributes table.

4. Graduate Attributes - Personal Development Plan: A list of all activities (including academic, professional and extra-curricular) that I have completed (or plan to complete) and which have contributed to my development of my Graduate Attributes. (This section is currently under construction).

5. What was the point of Graduate Attributes? - Reflective Learning: A section/blog reflecting on my process of engagement with and development of my Graduate Attributes.

6. Certificates and awards: Certificates and awards which relate to my development of Graduate Attributes
   - Prize for Best Dissertation
   - Stem Ambassador

**Me at work**

2. Graduate Attribute Evidence

In the course of my university studies, extra-curricular activities and work experience I have developed a range of academic, personal and transferable skills, as listed in the Graduate Attributes Table on this page. This section provides detailed evidence and examples of how and where these skills have been developed (continued...)

**Time management tips**

5. What was the point of Graduate Attributes?

The main focus of reflecting on Graduate Attributes and the work you have completed (both academic and in a job) is that you are much more attractive to future employers. You have all the skills and the evidence you have developed throughout your working life at your command. You can link future employers to your E-Portfolio and graduate attributes.

Reflecting on your Graduate Attributes also helps you succeed in interviews. You are able to recall your reflective thinking about your graduate attributes and connect them to situations the interviewers may throw at you.

The process of E-Portfolio construction and Graduate Attributes is an on-going, continuous nervous as you are always refining new skills and...
現在、グラスゴー大学医学生部の3年生です。今年は、寄生虫学、微生物学、病理学、薬理学の4つを専攻しており、中でも病理学に大変興味を抱いている。また、医学生としての経験を積むために、今年の夏、アメリカのコーネル大学のリサーチプロジェクトに参加する予定です。

高校生の頃に日本の東北県で交流留学していたので、日本語を話すことが出来ます。

私の趣味は乗馬、サッカー、そして愛犬のビーホフと遊ぶことです。ほとんどどの時間をビーホフと過ごしています。

今日一日笑ってお世話になります。
Reflection – lessons learned during project.

- Challenging
- Templates will help
  - Personalised versions
• “The most challenging part of this reflection was providing a diverse representation of each attribute from across my personal, academic, and professional experiences. I'd advise any student who wanted to build a Graduate Attributes ePortfolio to 1) **spend time thinking** about the best examples of how you've developed your graduate attributes from your diverse experiences; 2) **experiment** with how you arrange your views, and 3) **personalize** your pages with your own photos and associated materials to draw readers in.”
“The greatest challenges in this project often related to the initial recognition of attributes and skills I have gained throughout my degree. However upon reflection on my time at university this became much clearer and as a result I now have much greater confidence in my abilities and in embarking on my professional career.”
“So Mahara is not just a platform where you can store your information, it can also help with job applications, getting yourself known in the employment market and interview prep. It also gives you an idea on what people in other faculties are doing just in case it might be an interesting next step to take in your academic career. Very rarely do you get a chance to do so and that is what makes Mahara fantastic.”
• “The key benefits I have experienced from being engaged with the process of reflecting my own GAs are that I have had the opportunity to further develop some of my GAs and this is an incredible work experience that prepares you for future positions in any work field.”

• “E-Portfolio construction and Graduate Attributes is an ongoing, continuous process”
Available now on Mahara and Website (details on handout)

[Website Link]

www.gla.ac.uk/learningteaching/maharaportfolios