

# Stopping to think: reflections on the use of e-portfolios

Patricia McKellar, UK Centre for Legal Education,  
University of Warwick

Karen Barton, Glasgow Graduate School of Law,  
University of Strathclyde

# E-portfolios

‘e-Portfolios ... are **personal online spaces** for students to access services and store work. They will become ever more useful as learners grow up and start **moving between different types of learning and different institutions.**’

*Secretary of State for Education and Skills, January 2006*

‘we will have to re-engineer the data so that wherever you are in the education system **the individual learner can demonstrate** to another institution, an employer, or to a parent, **what they have done, how they are succeeding and who they are.**’

*Director of DfES Communications Directorate, January 2006*

‘Lifelong and personalised learning policy drivers propose that all learners should be able to **develop, record, repurpose and transfer a wide range of information about themselves electronically**, as they progress through different levels and episodes of learning, training and employment.’

*JISC Briefing Paper March 2006*

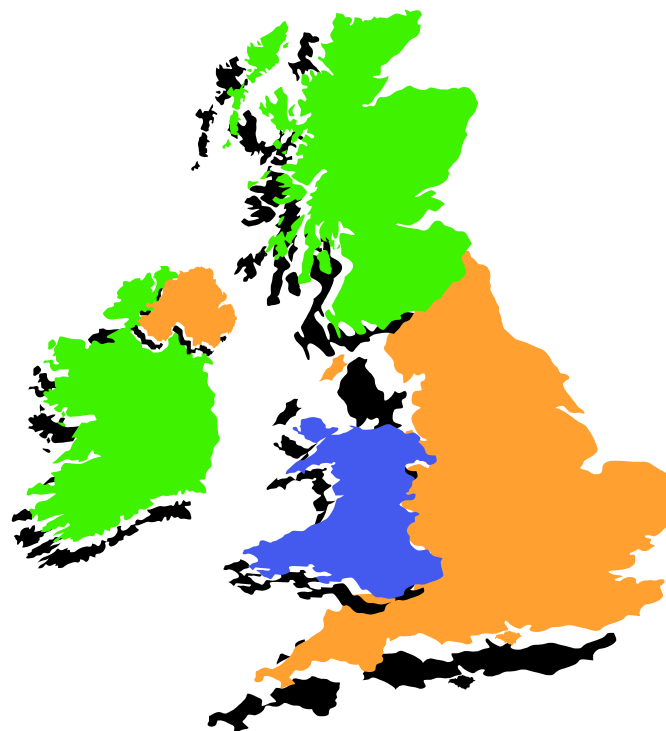
## Habits of heart, head, hand...

- *The educator of a professional is training someone to understand in order that they can act, to act in order that they can make a difference in the minds and lives of others- to act in order to serve others with responsibility and with integrity.*  
*Lee Schulman*
- Signature pedagogies: a mode of teaching identified with preparing people for a particular profession
- What it means to ‘think like a lawyer’

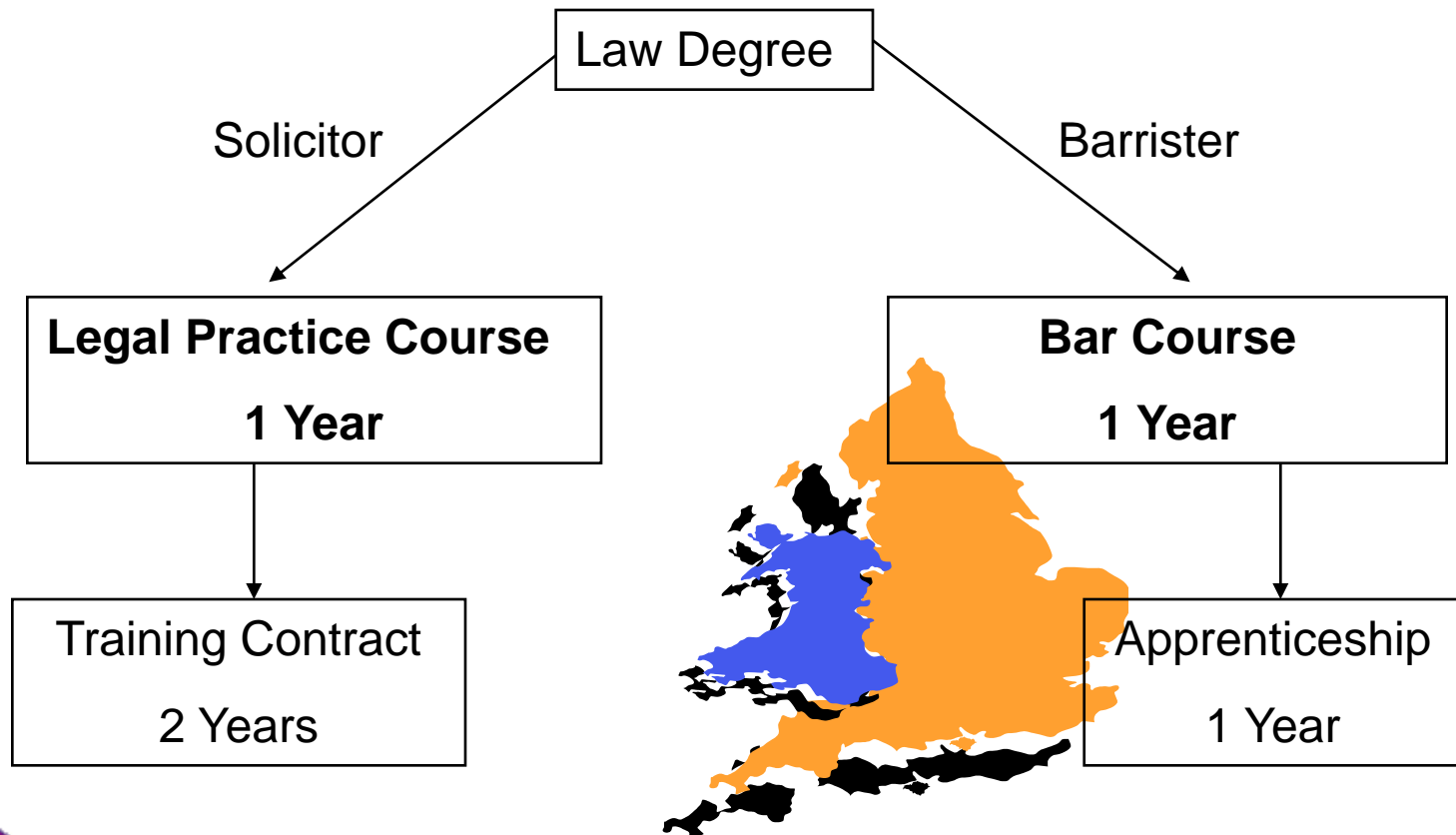
## Reflective Practice – why?

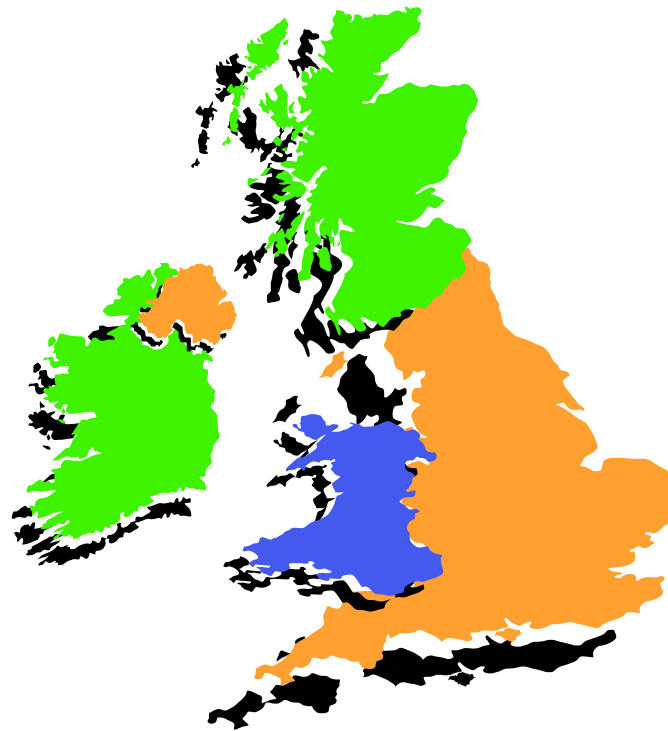
- Important to development of professionals because it enable us to learn from experience
- Students need to develop meta-cognitive skills because these skills affect the ability to understand and make sense of experience and are essential to the process of reflection and working in situations of uncertainty
- Reflective practitioners draw on intuition to do what feels right
- Asking students why they behaved or interpreted a situation in a particular way provides useful insights not only into how much and what they understand but also to extent to which they draw on intuition

## UK: the legal education landscape

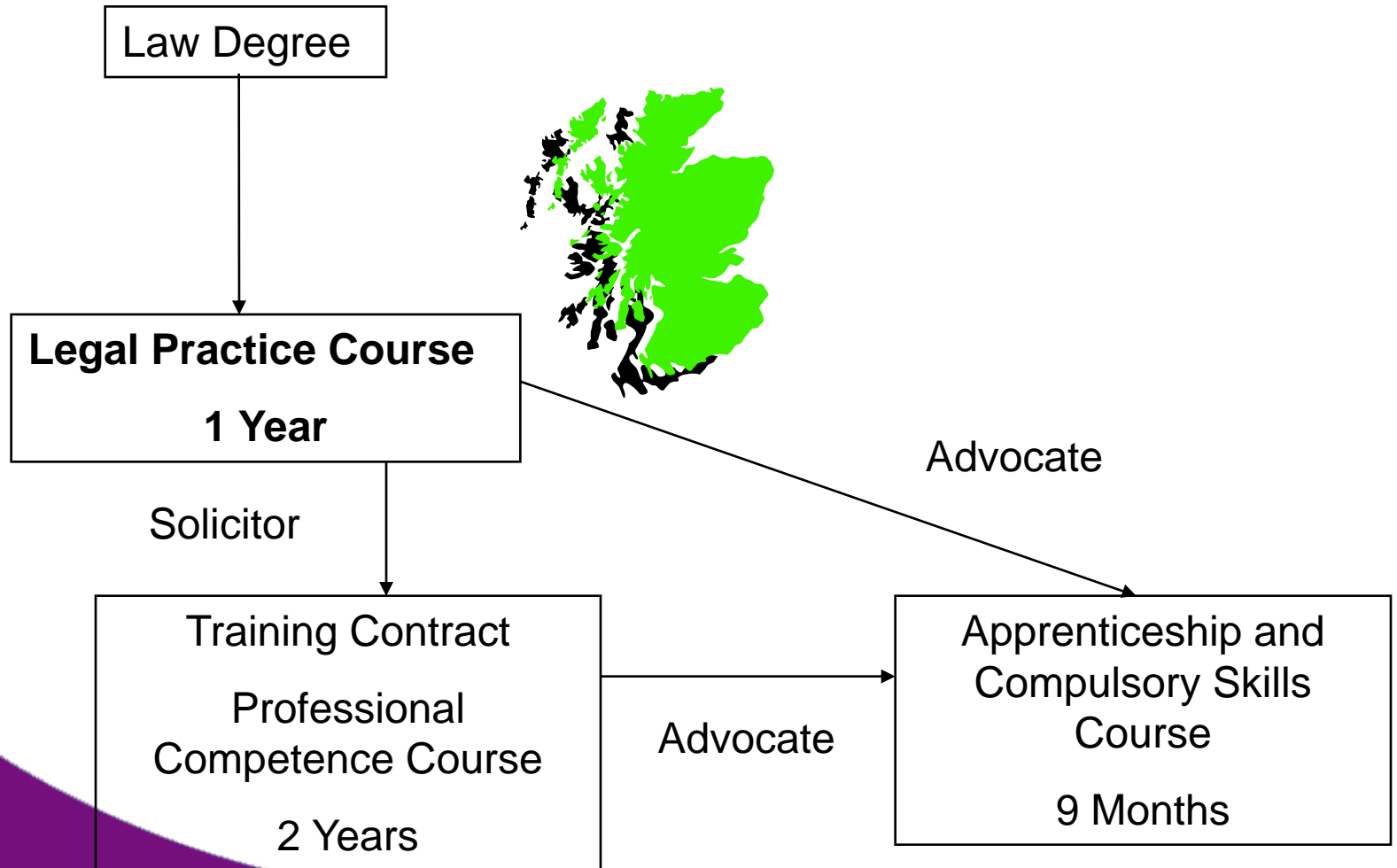


# England & Wales





# Scotland





# England & Wales

- Training Framework Review
- Second consultation: training contract
- Two routes:
  - a) traditional
  - b) 'appropriate legal experience'
- Assessment by portfolio

# England & Wales

- Broad agreement on proposal:  
An assessed period of work-based learning based on a clearly defined set of competence standards.
- Key concern:  
Assessment
- Commitment to work-based learning approach:  
Solicitors' Regulation Authority's role is to set & enforce standards  
Outcomes based approach
- Pilot work-based learning projects

# England & Wales

Work-based learning standards:

- Application of legal expertise
- Integrity
- Effective communication
- Client handling
- Business awareness
- Work load management
- Working with others
- Self awareness and development

# Scotland

“The programme design, and providers operating within it, should encourage students’ and trainees’ individual voices and interests, and the development of personal responsibility for engaging with legal practice, with ethics and justice, and undertaking continuing legal education and training.” (p.23)

“...outcome sets will be the site of reflective learning, namely the integration of a new personal development plan (PDP) or e-portfolio...” (p.25)

“What ever we do with assessment , in order for it to be successful we need to give training a new professional profile and understanding” (p. 38)

**Discussing the Detail...Paper 1: A consultation on the future of pre-qualification legal education and training in Scotland,  
Law Society of Scotland, Jan 2008**

# Scotland

“The Education and Training Committee’s view is that portfolio based learning will allow students to chart their progress in a variety of skills.” (p.33)

“ An e-portfolio is a preferred mode of assessment on PEAT 1; and will be an essential mode of assessment on PEAT 2...then assessment between PEAT 1 & 2 “ will be more streamlined and the transition between the two elements of professional training will be much easier for students, firms and the Society.” (p. 39)

**Discussing the Detail...Paper 1: A consultation on the future of pre-qualification legal education and training in Scotland,  
Law Society of Scotland, Jan 2008**

## USA

‘students need opportunities to learn about, reflect on and practice the responsibilities of legal professionals’ (p.188)

‘the essential goal of professional schools must be to form practitioners who are aware of what it takes to become competent in their chosen domain and to equip them with the reflective capacity and motivation to pursue genuine expertise.’ (p.173)

*Sullivan et al (2007),  
Educating Lawyers: Preparation for the Profession*

# The UKCLE e-Portfolio Project

## Objectives of Project

To discover:

- Is there a place for e-portfolios within legal education, the legal profession and professional qualification?
- Are there any specific issues about legal education and practice that we need to consider?
- Do e-portfolios provide an additional dimension to vocational legal education and training that is currently missing, or are they just more work and a passing fad?

# Outputs

- To develop a model which will allow students to create a personal e-portfolio which will follow them through their undergraduate, post graduate and professional lives to include their training, CPD and any subsequent academic qualifications.
- Sufficiently adaptable design to accommodate law students who seek not only to enter a professional legal career but also those who choose a legally related route or other professional career.



# Partners

- Glasgow Graduate School of Law  
Pilot project; bespoke VLE; p/g
- Oxford Institute of Legal Practice  
e-portfolio application; open source VLE; p/g
- University of Westminster  
new project; proprietary system VLE; u/g

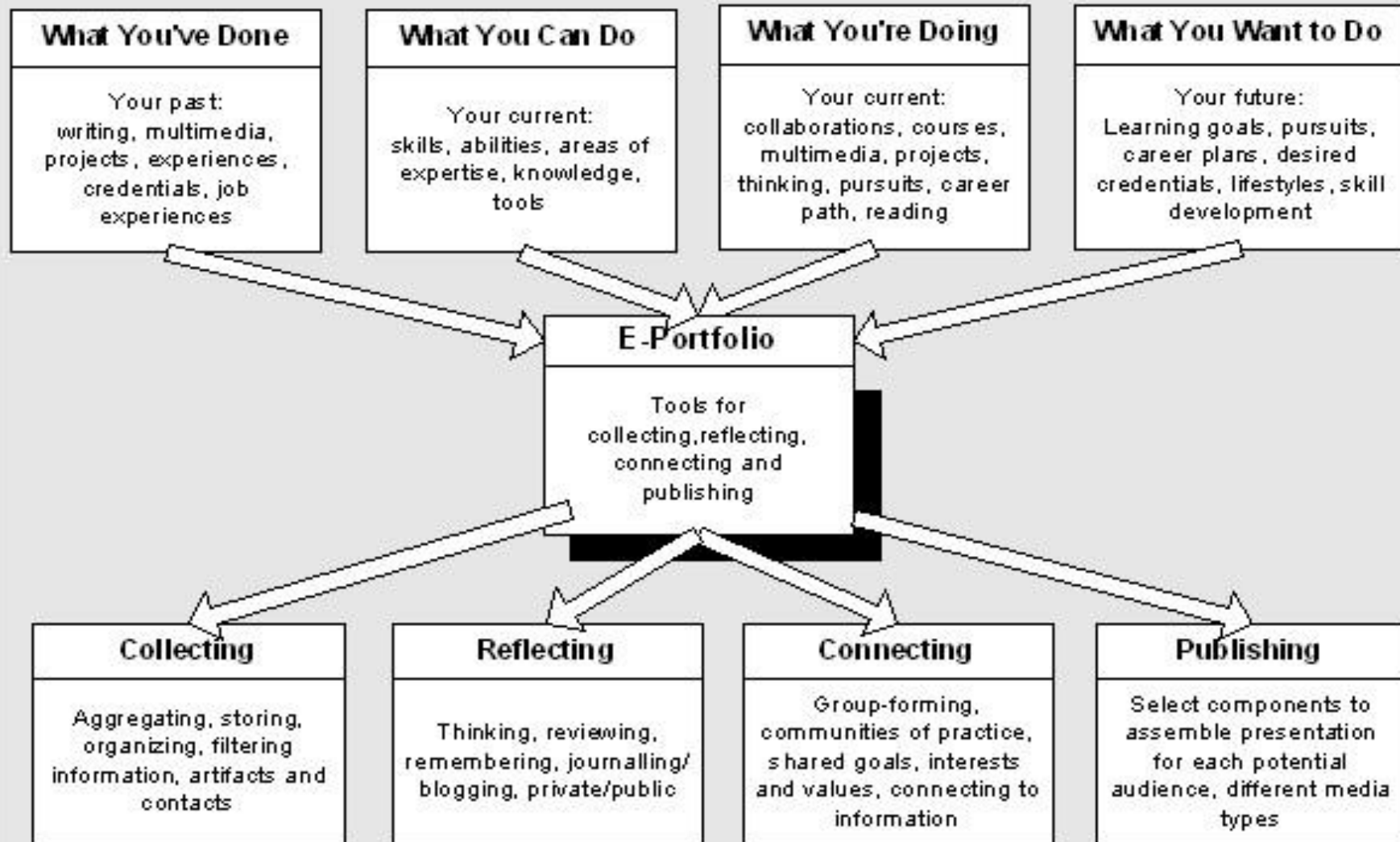
# Purpose of e-portfolios

- Summative assessment
- Learning and 'learning to learn'
- Presentation
- Personal and professional development planning

# E-Portfolio Model

Your identity: contact info, interests, values, reputation

Your network: contacts, collaborators, teams, teachers, mentors, colleagues, organizations, authors, friends, family



# Glasgow Graduate School of Law

- Diploma in Legal Practice
- Professional Legal Learning
- Students taught in a simulation learning environment
- Students engage in year-long collaborative learning in virtual firms on seven substantial projects
- They use f2f meetings, activity logs, personal logs, intranet discussion forums as chat rooms, drafts folders, correspondence folders and style banks

## E-portfolio Project at GGSL

- Introduced e-portfolio for students
- Invited local law firms to participate
- 5 firms agreed to take part in Pilot
- Project running with former students now in partner firms
- End of third year...

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- General Announcements
- Personal Injury
- Private Client
- Conveyancing
- Civil Court Practice

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26/10/2007

## Welcome

Hi,

Welcome to the Practice Management Message Board.

You can leave messages here for the other members of your firm (including your Practice Manager) and if you send an email to your firm's email address, the message will appear here too.

Posted at 11:15 by [Karen Barton](#) | Category: [General Announcements](#) | [Permalink](#) | [Email this Post](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#)

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create weblog

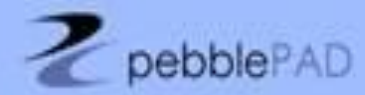
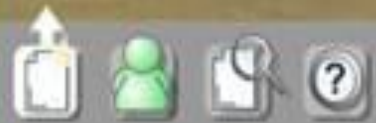
WebCV

learning profile

create record

create webfolio

upload new file

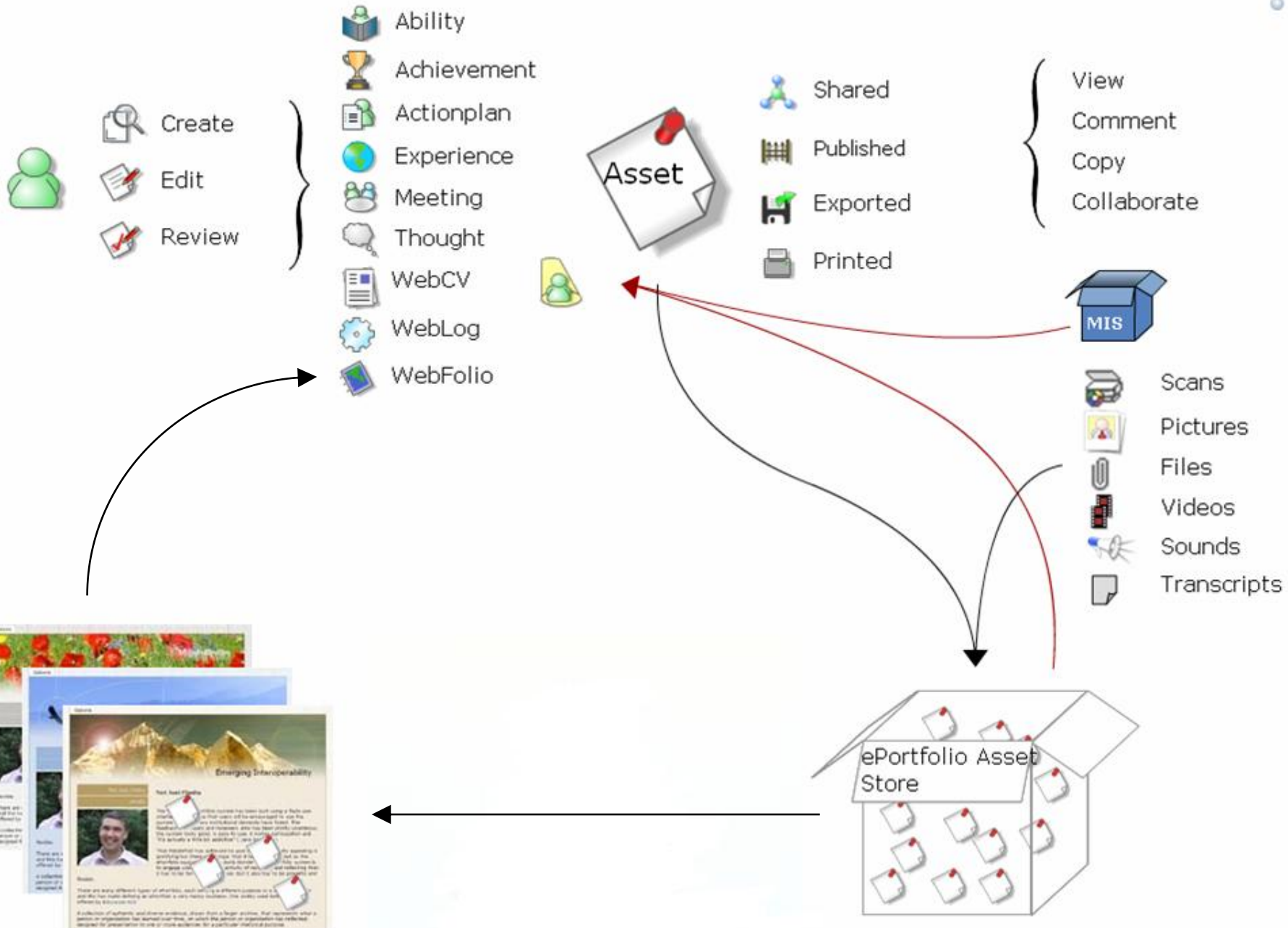


welcome back to PebblePad

**current ePortfolio activity**

- 2 new shared assets
- 0 assets with deadlines near
- 1 of your shares has a new comment
- 0 shared assets have been updated







<b>When?</b>	<b>What?</b>	<b>Pebble Pad tool?</b>	<b>Asset?</b>
<b>12 Nov 2007</b>	Portfolio project initial meeting with all students – general introduction etc plus complete ‘Skills of good lawyering’ and DLP Skills exercises	<b>Demo of various system tools</b>	<b>Skills of Good Lawyering DLP Skills assesement</b>
<b>End of November</b>	Complete individual Personal Statements	<b>Webfolio linked to other assets</b>	<b>Personal Statement</b>
<b>Beginning of Dec</b>	One to one meeting with KB		
<b>End of December</b>	Complete Critical Incident Report on PI project	<b>Experience or Weblog</b>	<b>Critical Incident Report</b>
<b>Week 1 January 2008</b>	Complete pre-Interview assessment reflective exercise	<b>Action Plan</b>	
<b>Week 4 January</b>	Complete post-Interview assessment reflective exercise having reviewed on line written assessment by client, video clip and own ‘Note to File’	<b>Ability or Achievement plus Webfolio linked to other assets</b>	
<b>End of February</b>	One to one meeting with KB		
<b>End of March</b>	Finalise Web Portfolio and submit	<b>Webfolio linked to other assets</b>	
<b>End of April</b>	One to one meeting with KB		



[Back to profile description](#)

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## Negotiation

Your ability to prepare for and conduct an effective negotiation.

**How confident or able are you in:**

**1.1 preparing effectively by the gathering of all relevant information**

**Not very** **Very**

1 2 3 4 5 6

**1.2 identifying a range of possible options including consideration of other party's objectives**

**Not very** **Very**

1 2 3 4 5 6

**1.3 preparing a formal structure for the negotiation meeting**

**Not very** **Very**

1 2 3 4 5 6

# Attributes of a Good Lawyer

This form is designed to help you articulate what the main attributes of being a good lawyer are.

You may agree to some extent with most of the statements given, but as you go through them, think about what your top 5 attributes are: what are you aspiring to be as a 'good lawyer'? At the end of the form you will be asked to identify the five qualities that sum up your concept of being a good lawyer. Some or all of these may be from the list provided, or you can include others of your own that don't appear on the list.

Finally you will be asked to reflect on how you will achieve these goals.

## Indicate which of the following statements you agree are a component of being a good lawyer

Tick the box beside each statement you agree with

- Producing work of high quality
- Sorting problems for clients
- Explaining things to clients plainly
- Being honest and trustworthy
- Achieving and maintaining high standards of skills and competence
- Showing respect for your clients
- Taking account of clients with different needs
- Using your own experience to improve what you do
- Doing intellectually demanding work
- Updating and responding to new demands
- Being an active member of the profession
- Being able to think for yourself
- Being able to work together co-operatively in a team
- Taking responsibility for your own work
- Raising ethical considerations when appropriate

Which five of the statements above taken together represent most closely your view of what being a good lawyer is

You can add your statements of your own if they do not appear in the previous list.

Attribute 1

Attribute 2

Attribute 3

Attribute 4

Attribute 5

How am I going to get there?

What skills do I need to develop?

How will I know I have achieved my goals?

Attach Evidence

Navigation bar of Windows Internet Explorer showing the address bar with the URL <http://www.pebblepad.co.uk/eportfolio/PebbleForm/answer.aspx?formid=24809>, search engines (Google, Bing), and various utility icons like Bookmarks, Pop-ups, and Check.

## Critical Incident Analysis

What is the Critical Incident?

This is a significant learning event for you because it is an incident:

- in which you felt your intervention/involvement really made a difference either directly or indirectly;
- that went unusually well;
- which did not go as planned;
- that is very ordinary and typical;
- that you think captures particular learning outcomes to be met;
- that was particularly demanding.

Describe the context of the incident, where and when it happened in relation to your work/life experience

Give a detailed description of what happened



## My Diploma Journey

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Introduction

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Interviewing Skills

---

Negotiation Skills

---

Legal Drafting Skills

---

Advocacy

---

Listening to clients

---

### **Introduction**

For the past five years I have been working towards gaining my Law Degree, securing a traineeship and passing the final stage of full time education, the Diploma in Legal Practice, so that I can embark on my dream of becoming a lawyer.

At this stage in my educational journey, I am able to reflect on my achievements to date: my qualifications and the experiences that have brought me to this point; and look forward to where I plan to go over the next year in my chosen career.

For me being a good lawyer is about being honest and trustworthy, doing the best for your client and producing work of high quality. At the start of the Diploma, I reflected on what I thought the **qualities of a good a lawyer** were. I also undertook an 'audit' of my current **skill levels** in a number of areas. This helped me think about developing my skills in certain areas at the same time as trying to work towards exhibiting the values I identified.

In the six months or so since I did this exercise, my views of a good lawyer have not changed, and I believe, from the evidence in my portfolio I am trying to live up to these values. I also believe my skills have developed, again as evidenced in my portfolio.

I know I still have a long way to go, but I am looking forward to embarking on the the next stage of my journey. As I move into my traineeship I hope to continue to work towards achieving my goals.



## Diploma in Legal Practice at the GGSL

Personal Statement

Company & Commercial

Private Client

Conveyancing

Civil Court Procedure

Professional Ethics

Financial Services

P.I. Project

Interviewing Skills

### Civil Court Procedure

I enjoyed the civil court transactional project. I had no experience of this area of law but now feel fairly confident that I could tackle raising an ordinary action up to the stage of lodging the **Record**. My firm received a Merit for the project. I personally achieved a mark of 73% in the examination.

I was assessed on my presentation of a **Motion** for interim contact. I found the actual assessment nerve wracking though I enjoyed the legal research aspect. I envisage that if/when I find myself in court that initially I will be a nervous wreck, however I am hopeful that this is something which will alleviate with time and experience. I received a Merit for the

assessment.





## Diploma in Legal Practice at the GGSL

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Personal Statement

---

Company & Commercial

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Private Client

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Conveyancing

---

Civil Court Procedure

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Professional Ethics

---

Financial Services

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P.I. Project

---

Interviewing Skills

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### **P.I. Project**

The personal injury project was the first opportunity the firm had of working together as a team. I really enjoyed the project and found it very realistic. I appreciate how lucky we are at the GGSL to be able to benefit from such technology and I think that the virtual environment of Ardcalloch has been a great benefit to learning law on a practical/transactional level.

In particular I enjoyed taking the leading role during the **negotiation meeting** (please note that the negotiation starts 43 minutes into the video file). The firm had been thorough in our research of both the facts and of the law so we had a reasoned basis for all

aspects of the negotiation.

I think that the firm worked well as a team. I focused on my experiences during the P.I. project for my **Practice Management Report** .



# Feedback

- Focus Groups at each Centre
- Students divided into groups
- Questions on flip charts
- Students put answers on 'post its' & stuck on flip chart
- Open Discussion

# What did you enjoy about doing the e-portfolio?

- Flexibility, interactivity
- Opportunity to express how you feel about your work
- Amalgamating my work to have an accurate record of my progress
- Taking a step back and analysing both the task and my efforts and completing it
- Being creative and personalising my work
- Reflecting on my performance...a good way of moving on...taking from it steps to continue and improve

## What did you not enjoy?

- Time consuming and more form filling
- Too much detail to input
- Just another IT system, security aspects, impractical
- I'm not very good at being reflective and found this element a bit difficult
- Wasn't sure at times what I was doing was right or appropriate

# What would have made the process easier for you?

- More examples of previous students' work
- If [institution] had preferred structure for the e-portfolio (ie subjects or skills pages) but allowing discretion for students who wished alternative structure
- Nothing – everything was well explained and illustrated with example portfolios

# What advice would you give another student who is about to start the project?

- Regular entries were important
- Try to keep on top of it and do the work as you go along
- Think about how you want to structure your final portfolio
- You don't have to spend hours on the project but spending a few minutes evaluating each piece of work will help you understand areas where it can be improved
- Try to think about it in bite size pieces and don't panic about producing the end product...and then piece it together like a jigsaw
- Don't feel it's necessary to upload every piece of work. If an asset doesn't sit well...don't use it

# What will you take with you into your career?

- The ability to reflect and the ability to learn from that process
- An ability to analyse work and tasks
- It gave a structure to measure development
- Can accept criticism better
- Have a better idea how to give feedback on problems experienced or seen
- Professional training is always a work in progress and lessons can be learned from past experience
- Take the reflective thought and achievements and mould them into an ongoing CV (resume)
- I will be more focussed on the impact of successfully completed tasks...and building my bank of experience
- I now know what I would like to do in my traineeship and what I need to improve

## Lessons learned so far...

- Portfolio specification and purpose needs to be clear and simple
- Collection of evidence can be problematic
- Lots of guidance and examples required
- Consider providing a detailed work-plan
- Tools to support reflection required
- Use forms and checklists to help avoid 'empty box syndrome'
- Regular reviews and feedback are essential
- Allow alternative models and range of assessment tools
- Start slowly – don't overwhelm them
- Will be more difficult to engage with the profession

## **UKCLE – e-portfolio resources**

<http://www.ukcle.ac.uk/research/projects/eportfolios.html>

<http://www.ukcle.ac.uk/resources/ict/eportfolios.html>



# Contacts

- Patricia McKellar  
[patricia.mckellar@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:patricia.mckellar@warwick.ac.uk)
- Karen Barton  
[karen.barton@strath.ac.uk](mailto:karen.barton@strath.ac.uk)