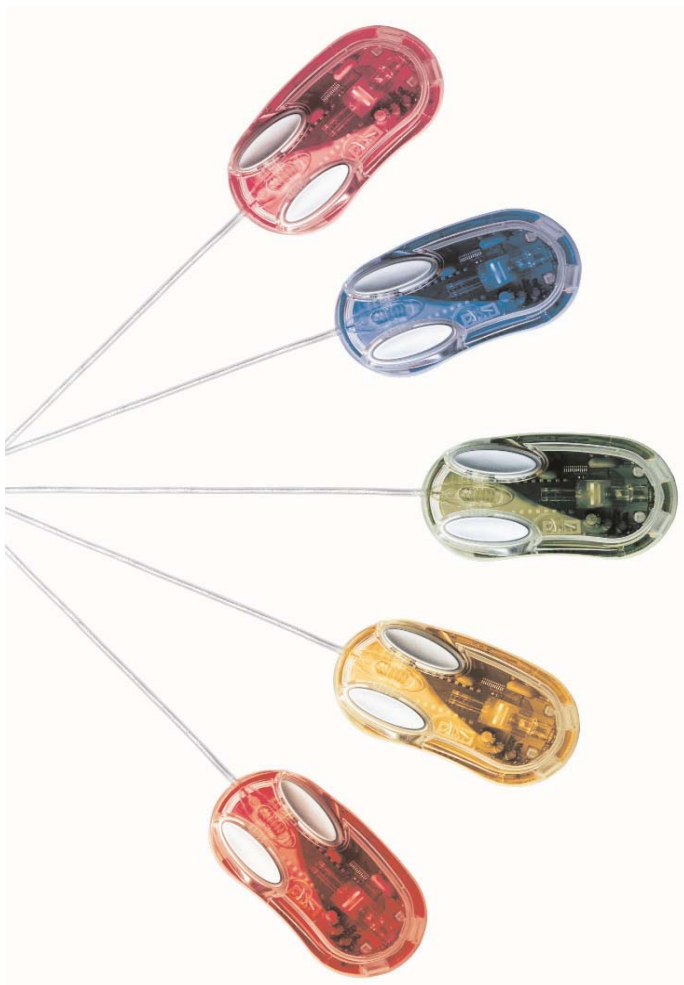


# A centre's guide to understanding e-portfolios



"Colleges could cut assessment by at least £500 million, and slash the time students take to complete vocational courses by two-thirds... Evidence from a Learning and Skills Council pilot study of computerized assessment shows that as much as £1 billion a year is wasted on duplicated effort and paperwork associated with NVQs and related vocational courses."

**Times Educational Supplement, FE Focus**  
(07.04.06)

# A centre's guide to understanding e-portfolios

City & Guilds encourages the use of e-portfolios for the assessment of NVQs. 40% of FE colleges and 33% of training providers said they were very likely or quite likely to switch to e-portfolios in the next two years. Now is the time to find out more.

## What is an e-portfolio?

E-portfolios are web or computer-based information management systems used for assessment and verification. They can be used for any competence-based qualifications with predefined, standard assessment criteria, for example NVQs. They offer:

- a channel for easy communication between learners, managers, tutors, assessors and verifiers
- a secure, password-controlled environment where candidates store evidence that is accessible to tutors, assessors, employers and awarding bodies
- great flexibility on evidence collection methods including digital pictures, sound and video
- a portfolio that is accessible anytime, anywhere, with a computer and internet connection
- facility for EV to view the portfolios and assessment decisions at any time.

## What are the benefits for our EVs?

By allowing the EV to assess readiness of centres and candidates for visits remotely, e-portfolios facilitate more face-to-face, assessment-focused time during centre visits rather than discovering that candidates aren't ready to be assessed, looking for paperwork etc. E-portfolios do not completely replace the face-to-face contact that centres have with EVs. By providing a communication medium between centres, candidates and EVs, remote assessment can reduce the need for as many centre visits and allow visits to focus on centre enquiries and assessment.

## What benefits have City & Guilds centres experienced using e-portfolios?

- assessment turnaround time reduced
- student motivation increased
- consistency of quality assessment improved
- quality standards improved
- transparent internal communication developed
- IT skills of learners/staff improved
- staff morale improved
- paperwork and storage of paperwork cut
- assessments made more accessible
- learner progression made visible individually or collectively
- trainer workload reduced
- security and confidentiality improved.

## Which systems does City & Guilds endorse?

City & Guilds doesn't produce its own e-portfolio system. Instead we currently endorse the following specialist e-portfolio products.

**Learning Assistant**, [www.learningassistant.com](http://www.learningassistant.com)

**Quickstep**, [www.ctdquickstep.co.uk](http://www.ctdquickstep.co.uk)

**OneFile**, [www.onefile.co.uk](http://www.onefile.co.uk)

We expect to be endorsing new providers soon so check our website at [www.cityandguilds.com/e-portfolios](http://www.cityandguilds.com/e-portfolios) for more details.

## What does City & Guilds endorsement mean?

Each of these systems has successfully undergone a rigorous process of quality approval by external verifiers in order to carry the badge of endorsement. Our customers can embrace innovation secure in the knowledge that the technology is compatible with City & Guilds' process and quality requirements.

## Buying an e-portfolio system

E-portfolio systems are available on subscription-per-user basis. Costs vary and e-portfolio providers will be able to negotiate with your centres a subscription package most suited to your needs. In most cases there will also be an initial set-up cost. E-portfolios may require less IT support than you think. You should discuss your situation with an e-portfolio provider who can explain the requirements of their system. Providers will be there to help with support, training and overcoming any teething problems.

## What do I do next?

If you have further questions, or would like an online product presentation, or a visit from a City & Guilds representative or even a meeting with one or more e-portfolio providers, please contact us:

[eportfolio@cityandguilds.com](mailto:eportfolio@cityandguilds.com)

or telephone John Coote on 07879 433 499

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