Getting Started with MyFolio

An ePortfolio tool for reflection, presentation and collaboration.

What is MyFolio?

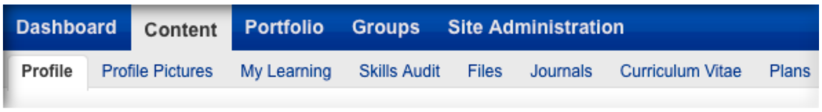
MyFolio is an ePortfolio system whose features can help you improve your learning, plan for the future and, eventually, gain employment. MyFolio can help you record and reflect upon your current academic, professional or personal practice, using Journals. You can also use MyFolio to create presentations, called 'Pages', and share them with friends, colleagues, teachers or prospective employers. All the content you create in MyFolio can be re-used or exported for use in other ePortfolio systems.

Getting there

To get to MyFolio, select the address bar in any web browser and type http://myfolio.kent.ac.uk. The login page contains a brief introduction to MyFolio and a video which explains ePortfolios in general. Enter your Kent username and password in the login box on the right of the page, then click the "Login" button.

Orientation

You'll now see the MyFolio Dashboard. This page contains some useful information about MyFolio, as well as information about your content and the activity of your friends or groups (see *Collaborate*, page 7). The column on the right displays some profile information, a list of "Online Users" and "Links and Resources". The blue navigation bar at the top of the page shows links to the different parts of MyFolio. Clicking on a link will display tabs for the relevant tools.



Note: Most pages in MyFolio contain help icons which provide useful information, so if you're ever confused about something they're a good place to start.

Initial Setup

The first time you visit MyFolio you should set up your account by clicking the "Settings" link in the top-right corner of the page. You'll see three tabs at the top of the page:

Settings – This tab contains a number of visual, functional and privacy-related settings. Most of the settings are fine already, but we recommend that you **tick the "Enable multiple Journals" box**. Click the "Save" button when you're done.

Notifications – This tab allows you to change how MyFolio contacts you with notifications (much like Facebook). Each setting has three options:

1. Email – You'll receive an email message for each notification.
2. Email Digest – You'll receive one email per day containing all notifications for the day.
3. Inbox – All notifications will be sent to your inbox within MyFolio, and you won't receive any emails.

Institution Membership – This tab tells you to which institutions (schools or departments) you belong in MyFolio. In some cases you may be able to request membership of an institution. In addition, if an institution has requested that you become a member, this page is where you can approve or reject the request.

When you have finished updating your settings (don't forget to save!), click the "Dashboard" link in the navigation bar to get back to the front page.

All about you

The next step is to set up your profile. This is where you can add information about yourself, including contact details, which you can use later in Pages. MyFolio allows you to select which information to share later, so complete as many of the fields as possible. Click on the "Content" link in the navigation bar to get started.

Profile

This tab contains four sections:

> *About Me* – Some of the fields in this page will be locked, but you'll at least be able to add a 'Display Name', which replaces your first name and surname for anyone viewing your content, and an 'Introduction', which will be visible to everyone within MyFolio.
>
> *Contact information* – The fields in this section are useful when you come to share a Page with a prospective employer. You can add other email addresses in this section, which may be useful depending upon the audience of a Page.
>
> *Messaging* – In this section you can add your account name for many of the popular instant messaging services.
>
> *General* – This section contains fields for more generic information about you.

Don't forget to "Save Profile" when you're done.

Profile Pictures

MyFolio allows you to upload up to five 'Profile Pictures' – images of you or representing you which you can use later. It can be useful to upload a relatively formal image of you for official or professional use, as well as a more casual or fun image for personal use. To upload a profile picture click the "Browse" button, then select an image from your computer and click "Open". Next, provide a "Title" for the image (this will help you identify it later), and click the "Upload" button.

You can set a "Default" picture which will then be preselected every time you add your profile picture to a Page, and a picture can be deleted by clicking the check box next to it and clicking the "Delete selected profile pictures" button.

Curriculum Vitae (CV)

This is split across six sections, each containing self-explanatory fields. The CV can be added to a Page completely or as individual fields so, again, it's useful to complete as many fields as possible. A CV forms an essential part of any job application, and may also be required for certain courses or assessments, so you should update your CV at each change in your personal circumstances, such as a new qualification or achievement.

Record & Reflect

One of the main purposes of MyFolio is reflection; describing a particular experience, explaining what you did and what you'd change if you were to repeat the experience. The key tools MyFolio provides for this are Journals, an area to store Files, and Plans. These can all be found by clicking on "Portfolio" in the navigation bar.

About Tags

Before we move on to the tools, let's briefly introduce the concept of 'tagging'. All elements in MyFolio, from individual Journal entries to entire Pages, allow you to use keywords, called 'tags' to categorise them. You may have experienced this before in other web tools. By tagging individual elements within MyFolio you make them easier to find later. Once you've added a tag to an element, that tag will appear in a 'tag cloud' on the right-hand side of any page in 'Portfolio'. The more elements you tag with a particular keyword, the larger the word will appear in your cloud. If you click on any tag in the cloud it will display all the elements associated to that tag.

Try not to be too specific with your keywords; there's no use to a tag which is only used once. Also, try to use tags to describe both the content of an element (placement, multimedia) and its purpose (experience, idea, meeting). It can be really useful to tag any particular skills related to your element, such as Communication or Research. For more information on skills please see http://bit.ly/MFEmpSkills.

Journals

A 'Journal' is essentially an online diary that you can use to record your thoughts, ideas, plans and experiences. Unlike a Blog, your Journals and Journal entries are visible only to you, but you can share an entire Journal or specific entries later in a Page (See Pages, page 4).

Click on the "Journals" tab, and you'll see that MyFolio has already created a Journal for you. If you've updated your settings (see *Initial Setup*, page 1) you can create as many Journals as you like. It may be a good idea to create a Journal for each project or main task you undertake. At the very least you should create separate Journals for personal, professional and academic activity, so that it's easier to reuse relevant entries. To create a new Journal:

1. Click the "Create Journal" button in the top-right corner of the "Journals" section.

2. Type a "Title" for your Journal along with, optionally, a "description".
3. Type some key words which apply to your Journal in the "Tags" area, separated by commas.
4. Click the "Create Journal" button. Your new Journal now appears in the "Journals" section.

You can use a Journal to reflect on a particular process, and this could form part of an assessment, but you'll soon get used to reflecting on your learning or aspects of your professional life in general. Put simply, a reflection is an analysis of your previous actions, to aid future improvement. A good example would be how you dealt with a problem, what happened as a result and what you'd do differently next time. It's a good idea to reflect little and often, so that it doesn't become a daunting task. Try not to be too descriptive; your reflection should be about how you dealt with a particular situation, not just a description of what happened. For more information on reflective writing please see http://bit.ly/MFReflect.

As with all other features of MyFolio, you can choose which parts of your Journal to share (an entire Journal, individual Journal entries or a number of recent entries), so you can be as personal and subjective as you like in your writing. Creating a Journal entry is similar to writing an email or forum entry. To create a new Journal entry:

1. Click on the "New entry" link to the right of your Journal title.
2. Give your entry a "Title".
3. Type the text of your entry in the "Body". This box has simple formatting options such as text alignment, decoration, and font selection. You can also insert an image but you have to know the exact URL, so it's easier to add it as an attachment (step 5).
4. Add any relevant "Tags" for your entry. If you've already created some tags you can click the "Show my tags" link to view and select existing tags.
5. If necessary, attach one or more files by clicking the "Add a file" button, then either:
    a. Selecting an existing file from your files area (see *Files* below) or
    b. Ticking the disclaimer check-box and then browsing for a file on your computer.
6. If you need to save changes but haven't finished writing, tick the "Draft" check box. This will ensure that the entry is only visible to you, even if you've shared the entire Journal.
7. Un-tick the "Allow comments" check box if you don't want viewers to be able to comment on this specific entry. This can be overridden later if left ticked.

You'll then be taken to the main page of the Journal in which you wrote your entry. This page lists all entries within the Journal and allows you to edit, delete, or publish (if draft) any existing entry.

Files

Each MyFolio user is provided with a 'Files' area, subject to a quota. This is usually 50 megabytes and although this may seem like a small amount of space there are ways to manage this:

- Use the 'Auto resize' feature when uploading images so that your image files are automatically resized to fit within the dimensions 1024px by 768px. This is an ideal size to display an image on the web. Remember that an image added to a Page will be resized to fit within the containing column, and clicking on the image will display it at full size. See http://bit.ly/MFResize for more information.
- Don't upload video; use YouTube instead. See http://bit.ly/MFVideo for instructions.
- Ensure any recorded audio is at a low bit-rate. 64kbps is fine for voice recordings.
- Compress images in any Microsoft Office documents before you upload them. This option is usually found in the Format Pictures toolbar/ribbon when you select an image, and you have the ability to compress all images in the document in one go. Alternatively you could print your document to PDF and upload that instead (Google "PDF printer" if using Windows; PDF printing is supported natively on Mac and Linux), which will not only keep the file size down but also maximise compatibility with mobile devices.

The type of files you will upload will usually be supporting evidence for reflection in Journal entries or presentation materials for inclusion in Pages. Remember that you should only upload files to which you hold the copyright, or have specific permission from the author. To upload a file:

1. Click on the "Files" tab, under "Content". This will display all existing files in your files area (including those attached to Journal entries) along with a graph indicating how much of your quota you have used on the right-hand side of the page.
2. Tick the "Upload File" disclaimer checkbox **after** reading the disclaimer.
3. Click the "Browse" button and select the file from your computer.

The file will be uploaded to your files area. You can also create folders to organise your files. Simply type the folder name into the “Create folder” field and click the “Create folder” button. Files can then be moved into the folders by dragging their icons.

It’s also useful to add more information about each file or folder, particularly if you plan to include them in any Pages. To do this:

1. Click the “edit” link next to the item.
2. Edit the “Name” and “Description” if necessary.
3. Add any relevant tags and click “Save Changes”.

Plans

A plan is a simple task manager. You can create a plan for a particular process or project, and then create individual tasks with deadlines. You can keep your plan updated by ticking any tasks you have completed. A plan can be added to a Page for assessment or presentation purposes, and the status of tasks will be automatically updated. To create a new plan:

1. Click on the “Plans” tab, in the “Content” section.
2. Click the “New plan” button.
3. Provide a ‘Title’ and, optionally, a ‘Description’ of your plan.
4. Click the “Save plan” button.

You’ll be taken into your plan, which currently won’t contain any tasks. To add a task:

1. Click the “New Task” button.
2. Provide a ‘Title’ and ‘Completion date’ for the task.
3. Optionally, add a description of the task. This is recommended if you intend to share your plan in a Page.
4. Click the “Save Task” button.

This task will now be displayed in your plan, and you can “edit” (to change completion dates or mark completed) or “delete” individual tasks using the appropriate links on the right.

Present & Share

The previous sections of this guide have shown you how to add content to your ePortfolio, but none of this is currently visible to anyone but you. If you want to share this information with, or present it to, other people, you need to add it to a Page.

Pages

A Page is a web page which is easy to edit, and can be shared with friends or groups, publicly accessible to the World Wide Web, or submitted for assessment. You can insert content from within MyFolio, and import or embed content from other sources. Click on the “Pages” tab, under the “Portfolio” heading, to get started.

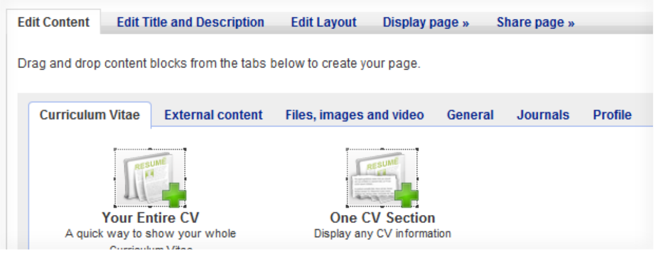
The ‘Pages’ tab will already show two existing Pages:

Profile Page – This is what other users of MyFolio will see when they click on your name in the ‘Online Users’ list, or search for you. You can add, edit or delete any elements displayed in this Page.

Dashboard Page – This contains the elements you see on the front page of MyFolio after you log in, and allows you to tailor what you see there.

To create a new Page, click on the “Create Page” button in the top-right corner. You’ll be taken to the editing page.

This page shows a number of “content blocks”, organised into tabs, which you can **drag and drop onto the content area below**. Above the content blocks you’ll find more tabs which take you through the process of creating a Page (right). The content area is laid out in three columns of equal width, but you can change the number and/or width of columns by clicking the “Edit layout” tab.



Once added, blocks can be rearranged and moved between columns simply by dragging them. You can change the visual style of your Page by selecting a “Theme” from the drop-down list in the centre of the page.

Inserting existing content
To insert content you have created in MyFolio, simply drag and drop the relevant content block into the content area. When you do this you will be given options about what to show and how it will be displayed. Some types of content can be added in different ways. For example, you can add an entire Journal, a single Journal entry or a number of recent entries from a Journal. Click through the tabs to see the available blocks.

Inserting external content
Pages also allow you to make use of existing content outside of MyFolio. This may include content you have created on another web site, or someone else's content which you are using to illustrate or enhance your Page. If you're using someone else's content then you should always give credit to the content owner where possible. Content blocks for external content are:

External feed – This pulls in content from an external RSS or Atom feed, such as a Journal or podcast. Useful if you already have a Journal elsewhere.

External Video – Allows you to display a YouTube video on your Page. Simply paste the embed code or URL of a YouTube video into the Video URL feed in the options window. You can also change the width and height of the video. To find out how to use YouTube please see http://bit.ly/MFVideo.

Text Box – Although intended to provide a way to add specific formatted text to your Page, this block also allows you to enter HTML mode and paste in an embed code from any website. This is useful for adding things like Picasa slideshows or Slideshare presentations. For full instructions please see http://bit.ly/MFEmbedding.

Creating new content
Because of the way content can be re-used in MyFolio, there are very few occasions where you'd want to create content in a Page. Content *created* in a Page can't be re-used, unless you copy the Page, so it's usually better to create a Journal entry instead and insert it individually. However, if you need to add specific introductory or descriptive information to a Page, which is only relevant to the individual Page, you can do so by adding a "Text Box" (in the "General" tab). This provides the same text editor found in Journal entries and other formatted-text fields, so you can change the font, colour, size and alignment of text and include web links, images and external content. If you're confident in writing HTML then you can also type HTML code directly into the editor after clicking the HTML button in the toolbar.

Title and Description
Once you are happy with the content of your Page, click the "Edit title and description" tab. In this tab, provide a "Title" and, optionally, a description for your Page. The description will appear at the top of the Page, between the title and the content. Next, add any relevant tags, then select the "Name display format", as your name will be displayed at the top of your Page.

Note: if you forget to do this, your Page will be named "Untitled" and you can add this information later.

Share
Your Page is initially only available to you, and you don't have to share it at all. However, if you're happy with the title and description of the Page and would like to share it now, click the "Share page" tab. You can use this tab to share your Page with individuals or groups of people. Before you choose who to give access to, you need to decide what they will be allowed to do, by ticking the relevant check-box:

Allow Comments – This will allow the viewer to leave feedback on your Page as a whole, and any individual element for which you have allowed comments (e.g. a Journal entry).

Moderate Comments – If 'Allow Comments' is selected you can tick this option so that any comments won't be visible to other viewers until you have approved them.

Allow Copying – This will allow other MyFolio users to copy the Page into their own portfolio.

Then you can choose who can access your Page by clicking the "Add" button next to the relevant option:

Public – This makes your Page available to the World Wide Web, so anyone with web access can see your Page. **Please note** that, unlike the Secret URL option, this will make any information displayed in the Page, including any telephone numbers and email addresses, accessible by web search software such as Google, and so you should carefully consider your privacy before choosing this option.

Logged in users – Everyone with a MyFolio account, i.e. all Kent staff and students.

Friends – All your MyFolio friends (see *Friends*, page 6).

Search – You can use the "Search" box to find individual users or groups. Type the name in the search box, select if you are searching for a user or a group, then click the "Go" button. The results will appear in a list below and you can click the "Add" button next to the user or group that you want to add. In the case of groups, you can choose whether to share your Page with all members of the group or just those with a certain role, by selecting from the drop-down list.

Once you have added someone you'll notice that you can tailor the exact start and end dates of their access. You can also "override" these dates by entering dates at the bottom of the page. Once you have finished, click the "Save" button. You have now created, populated and shared your Page. You'll return to the 'My Pages' page, and your Page will now appear in the list. You can edit the title and description, content and layout, and access by clicking the relevant link. If you need to delete a Page, just click the ☒ icon on the right. This won't delete any of your content such as Journals, plans or files, but the content of any 'Text Box' blocks will be deleted, as it is stored within the Page.

Secret URL

Another sharing option, "Secret URL", makes your Page available on the World Wide Web but gives it a complicated URL which makes it harder to guess, and stops search engines from indexing the page. This is useful if you don't want the entire world to be able to access your personal information, but need someone without a MyFolio login (e.g. a prospective employer or a family member) to see it. To create a Secret URL:

1. Click on "Portfolio", then "Share" in the navigation bar at the top of the screen.
2. Next to the name of your Page, in the "Secret URLs" column, click the edit icon.
3. Click the "Add" button, then copy the web address which appears above.
4. If required, you can change access options by clicking the same edit icon to the right of the URL.
5. You can then share this link as widely or exclusively as required, via email for example.

Collections

Each Page is displayed as a single sheet, so it can be difficult to manage lots of content in a single Page. You can instead split your presentation into several Pages and add them to a 'Collection'. The collection can then be shared in the same way as an individual Page, and you can easily add navigation links into each Page within the collection. To create a new collection:

1. Click on the "Collections" tab.
2. Click the "New Collection" button in the top-right corner.
3. Provide a "Collection name" and, optionally, a description. Unlike in Pages, the description does not appear when you view the collection.
4. Decide whether to add a "Page navigation bar" to every Page in the collection. This is the default, and will display above each Page. The alternative is to add the "Navigation" content block, which is displayed as a vertical list of links, to each Page in the collection. You'll need to have some form of navigation in your collection so that the viewer can go to each Page within the collection.
5. Click the "Next: Edit collection Pages" button.
6. You'll now see a list of your available Pages. As Pages can't be added to more than one collection, this list will only display Pages not already in a collection. Tick each of the Pages you want to add, then click the "Add Pages" button.
7. Using the Up and Down arrows you can rearrange the order of your pages easily. When you are happy with the arrangement, click the "Done" button.

You'll return to the 'My Collections' page, and your collection will appear within the list, with similar options as for Pages. You can then set the access permissions as you did with individual Pages, by clicking the "Share" tab.

Note: Once added to a collection, a Page no longer has its own individual access settings, as viewers need to be able to see all the Pages within the collection.

Submit

If one of your taught modules is using MyFolio for assessment, you will be required at some point to submit a Page to your teacher for assessment. To find out how to do this, please see http://bit.ly/MFAssess.

Export

In some situations you may wish to export content from MyFolio for use elsewhere. For instance, you may wish to submit a Page as a piece of work for assessment outside of MyFolio, or upload a Page to a web server for use as a web site. Alternatively, you may wish to use a different ePortfolio provider at some point. See http://bit.ly/MFExporting to find out how.

Collaborate

In addition to the personal and professional benefits provided by MyFolio, it also allows collaboration between friends and groups of people. To begin, click on the "Groups" link in the navigation bar.

Friends

Like Facebook, MyFolio allows you to request 'friendship' with other users. You can share Pages with all your friends easily, and use their feedback to improve your Page. To request friendship with another MyFolio user, type their name in the "Search users" box in the top-right corner of any page, then click the "Send friend request!" link to the right of their name in the results. Depending on their account settings they may have to approve your request before you are officially 'Friends'.

You can view a list of all your friends, and the Pages they have shared with you, by clicking on the "Friends" tab. This page also allows you to remove users from your friends, by clicking the "Remove from friends" link to the right of their name.

Groups

You can create Groups in MyFolio, with different membership options. Your group can then work together on Pages, or communicate via forums. You may want to create a group for a particular project you're working on, or for a society or club of which you are a member. For information on creating and managing groups, see http://bit.ly/MFGroup.

MyFolio enables groups to be self-created and self-managed for personal development and to ultimately enable users to represent themselves in a positive way. However, the purpose and content contained therein is bound by the same guidelines that relate to acceptable use of University systems.

Help & Support

If you are expected to use MyFolio for assessment, and are unsure exactly what is required of you, contact the teacher who is conducting the assessment.

If you are experiencing technical or functional problems with the software, or want to know how to use a particular tool within MyFolio, please post a message in the appropriate forum in the 'MyFolio Support' group. Alternatively, contact the IT Helpdesk (helpdesk@kent.ac.uk)

If you'd like to learn more about reflection or personal development planning, please contact Louise Frith (ljf@kent.ac.uk).

For more training resources and instructional videos, please visit the eLearning website (http://bit.ly/elearnhowto).

To help us improve this training guide, please give feedback by emailing elearning@kent.ac.uk.