

# From paper to e-portfolio: the meteoric progression of a University skills tool

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## Overview

- SaPRA: what is it?
- SaPRA: why do it?
- From paper to e-portfolio via VLE

## SaPRA: What is it?

- Skills and Personal Reflective Activity
- Skills self-audit
- Covers wide range of skills expected in HE, e.g. academic reading & writing, IT skills etc.
- Includes planning activity to improve skills
- Completed at start of 1<sup>st</sup> year and used throughout the year
- New versions being written for different stages

## SaPRA: Why do it?

- Helps students deal with academic integration and cohesion.
- Initiates reflection on prior learning experiences
- Encourages students to think about how they will adjust to being at University.
- Personal Development Planning (PDP)

## From paper to e-portfolio via VLE

- Phase 1: Summer 06 – Development of SaPRA for 06/07 paper delivery.
- Phase 2: Summer 07 – conversion to electronic format in Moodle for 07/08.
- Phase 3: May 08 – conversion to e-portfolio profile

## Phase 1: Paper

- Proof of concept – academic staff & students found it a useful and effective activity.
- Short timescales for production of activity and limited IT support
- Felt students needed an artefact to help their process of reflection
- Workbook contained series of activities designed to help students identify their levels of confidence

## Phase 2: VLE

- Moodle 'survey tool' used to create electronic version
- Advantages:
  - Complete & access from any computer
  - Course teams get anonymised data about their students strengths and weaknesses
- Disadvantages:
  - Not integrated into University PDP systems
  - Students could not create evidence log or action plans within survey tool

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## Communication Skills

Please rate your levels of confidence in the following situations on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is not at all confident and 5 is very confident.

	1	2	3	4	5
Talking to people I don't know	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Joining in class or group discussions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Asking questions if I don't understand something	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Feeling comfortable when giving a talk or presentation to a group	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Participating in pair discussions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Approaching lecturers and tutors and asking them questions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Approaching support staff and asking them questions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Approaching other students and asking them questions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Finding the right words to explain what you mean	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Expressing my ideas in appropriate English	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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## General Academic Skills

Please rate your levels of confidence in the following situations on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is not at all confident and 5 is very confident.

	1	2	3	4	5
Using a thesaurus	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Using a dictionary	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Listening and concentrating for long periods (e.g. in a lecture)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Accessing lecture notes and information electronically e.g. in BlackBoard, on the web, accessing online journals and texts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Judging the reliability of published materials (i.e. understanding what is a valid and reliable source)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Finding printed books and journals in an academic library	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Finding electronic books and journals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Using library catalogues and databases	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Using your analytical skills to critically analyse texts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Using your problem solving skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Spelling accurately	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Use of punctuation and grammar	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Phase 3: E-portfolio

- PebblePAD profile tool
- Advantages:
  - Students can create action plans & link to evidence directly from SaPRA
  - Allows creation of a fully integrated portfolio of evidence based on the skills outlined in SaPRA.
- Disadvantages:
  - Students need to be familiar with PebblePAD in order to use SaPRA independently



**Academic Writing Skills**

Academic Reading Skills

Expectations about  
University study

Individual Skills

Communication Skills

**Academic Writing Skills**

This section will help you to assess your confidence in your academic writing skills.

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being not confident at all and 5 being very confident, how do you feel about

taking effective notes in lectures	3				
taking effective notes from books and journal articles	3				
taking effective notes from online sources	4				
paraphrasing (putting information into your own words) without copying large sections	5				
expressing your ideas clearly in your writing	4				
using appropriate vocabulary in your academic writing	4				
writing academic essays/reports and assignments	4				
writing academic bibliographies and references	4				

Average rating: 3



## Lessons learnt

- Students enjoy these types of activities
- Face-to-face contact is needed for initial engagement; subsequent activities can be done online
- SaPRA is an ongoing process, not a one off intervention
- SaPRA is a reflective tool, not a diagnostic instrument
- Staff have brought in as it helps support their personal tutoring interventions