

Things have been pretty busy over the last few months for the PebblePad team. Once its official launch last September we have seen dozens of organisations choosing PebblePad as their ePortfolio system.

We have certainly not been sitting back and enjoying this success and have done a lot of work over the past academic year to extend and improve the system.

## What's New in PebblePad?

### New Single Screen Interface

The biggest change for the coming academic year is a new single screen interface which makes navigating around PebblePad far easier. This new design has been introduced following feedback from users who found the previous multi-screen arrangement confusing.

Early trials have proved very successful with extremely positive feedback from both new and existing users.



### New Export/Import Facilities

The latest version of PebblePad allows users to export their entire ePortfolio in IMS ePortfolio 1.0 compatible format. So if a user moves to another PebblePad institution or an institution using another compliant system they can import all their existing ePortfolio or selected items in a matter of seconds.



### New Save to Disk Option

PebblePad now supports the saving of Webfolios in HTML format. Users can create a Webfolio in PebblePad, export it as a single Zip file, extract the Zip and upload the files to a web server and within minutes they have their own public website.

We've also included facilities to autorun a Webfolios from a CD. Which means users can burn the contents from the extracted ZIP file to CD, pop the disc in a PC and the Webfolio will automatically load in a browser window. Meaning people can view the Webfolio without having to connect to the Internet.



### New CV Builder

We have now developed a CV builder facility for PebblePad. This enables users to draw upon items they have created in PebblePad as well as contact information which can be manually added or provided by a student management system. There are also facilities to add referees, personal statements, details of qualifications and previous experience. Once created the CV can be shared in the same way as any other PebblePad item or saved as a Word document for further offline editing.



## Improved Accessibility

PebblePad has had a major accessibility overhaul which means fuller support for tabbing through the system, more options for customising colours and better support for screen readers.

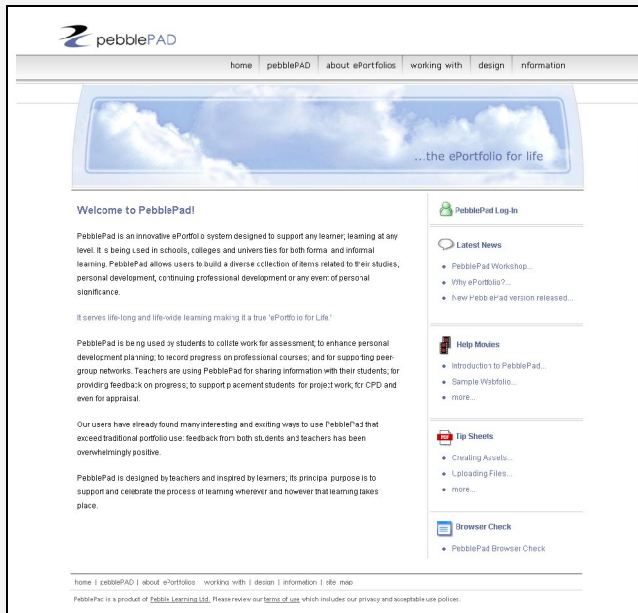


## Updated Gateway Facility

Gateways are the facility that acts as a shared workspace to distribute content, allow users to submit work for assessment or access assets for peer review.

We've completely rebuilt gateways to include a whole raft of functionality making them more flexible and configurable with full support for external examiner access.

PebblePad Website : <http://www.pebblepad.co.uk>



We have also redeveloped our website. For our customers we are creating a customer area which will include a whole new collection of tip sheets, timelines for new releases and a forum for customers to post questions, request new features as well as refinements to existing ones and generally post thoughts about PebblePad and ePortfolios.

We've been experimenting with video and Vodcast technology so if you'd like to see a video with some Flash integration which highlights a conceptual model for PebblePad go to [http://www.pebblepad.co.uk/about\\_pp.asp](http://www.pebblepad.co.uk/about_pp.asp).

We have also set up a PebblePad Mailing List at JiscMail. We don't intend to bombard people with emails via this list, but it should offer a space for questions about PebblePad and discussions around what PebblePad has to offer. To join the mailing list go to <http://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/> and type PebblePad into the search option.

## PebblePad Workshop (includes accounts to run a pilot)

14 September 2006 in Telford, Shropshire

We are running a one day workshop to introduce PebblePad and give people a proper insight into how the system works and what can be achieved with ePortfolio.

The price of the workshop includes 11 accounts on a hosted service to allow you to run a small scale pilot so you can properly evaluate the system in a real life use.

Visit : <http://www.pebblepad.co.uk/workshop.asp> for details.



## Getting About

Over the next few months we will be attending a number of conferences and workshops. We'd be delighted to meet you and discuss the latest developments and features of PebblePad. So if you are getting out and about, please drop by and see us. Here are a few of the events you'll be able to find us at :

### **ALT Conference – Edinburgh, 5<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> September 2006**

After our very successful exhibition at the ALT conference last September in Manchester we'll be back again in Edinburgh this year. Be sure to stop by the stand early as last year we were kept so busy that we literally lost our voices from all the talking! The draft programme has at least 5 sessions that will be talking about PebblePad use.

<http://www.alt.ac.uk/altc2006/>

### **4<sup>th</sup> International ePortfolio Conference – Oxford, 11<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> October 2006**

The main theme for the 2006 conference is: "eStrategies for Empowering Learners." Again there will be a number of presentations from PebblePad users at the conference including some students.

<http://www.eife-l.org/news/ep2006/>

### **Online Educa –Berlin, 29<sup>th</sup> November – December 1st 2006**

12<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Technology Supported Learning and Training.

<http://www.online-educa.com/>

## What People Are Saying About PebblePad

### **LINK - Issue 15 - Supporting Students - February 2006**

Higher Education Academy Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism Network  
Crispin Dale, Alison Barber and Rachel Livesey, University of Wolverhampton discuss their use of PebblePad.

[http://www.hlst.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/link15/Link\\_15.pdf](http://www.hlst.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/link15/Link_15.pdf)

### **ALT Online News Letter - Issue 5, July 2006**

Neal Sumner from City University reviews PebblePad for the ALT newsletter.

[http://newsletter.alt.ac.uk/e\\_article000611550.cfm](http://newsletter.alt.ac.uk/e_article000611550.cfm)

### **JISC funded ePISTLE Project Final Report**

[http://www.jisc.ac.uk/uploaded\\_documents/epistleFinalReport.pdf](http://www.jisc.ac.uk/uploaded_documents/epistleFinalReport.pdf)

## Research

We'd like to add a research section on our website so if you are publishing your ePortfolio research please send us details and we'll start to create a resource for ePortfolio users everywhere. Also let us know if you are presenting anywhere as your work will undoubtedly be of interest to the wider PebblePad community.

## LIPID

As part of the JISC toolkit programme Pebble Learning are working with the University of Wolverhampton and Queen Margaret University College to develop interoperability between PebblePad and the SITS student management system using the Sweet.Net toolkit. This will enable PebblePad to draw personal information from SITS and display it in PebblePad. Amongst the many benefits are the ability for students to display information about their grades and for tutors to have the ability to organise groups and gateways based on module enrolment. The project development is scheduled to be complete by August 31 2006 at which point the work will be available as an open source toolkit.

For more information visit the Project website at <http://www.LIPDIPROject.org.uk>.

## VLE Integration

We have been working with two of our customers and have developed single sign on functionality for their VLE's (a bespoke VLE, WOLF and WebCT Vista). We'll shortly be developing single sign on for Moodle and are keen to support our customers with their ePortfolio integration.

### PebblePad in Primary Schools

Having developed and trialled a new interface for use in Primary schools we are delighted to announce that PebblePad is being adopted by Sandwell Education as part of their Teacher of the Future project.

The project will be using PebblePad to support the transition between Primary and Secondary schools, with primary pupils creating eportfolio assets before they move to their secondary schools.

Pupils will continue to develop their ePortfolio through both formal and informal activity. In all 16,000 pupils will be using PebblePad over a three year period in this exciting and innovative project.

