

## **New event: eReturn – using ePortfolios to support women returners to employment**

The Association for Learning Technology (ALT) announces two one-day events to disseminate the work of the JISC-funded eReturn project. The eReturn project promotes the use of ePortfolios to support women returners to employment, ensuring that they have an electronic record of achievements from the variety of learning establishments they may have studied at along with reflections, presentations and other material which can be used for employment applications.

Date: 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> February 2009

Timings: 1030 to 1600

Location: Aston Business School, Birmingham

Cost: Fee-free

Detailed programmes can be found at: [http://www.alt.ac.uk/workshop\\_detail.php?e=321](http://www.alt.ac.uk/workshop_detail.php?e=321)

The project is led by the Open University, in partnership with the UK Resource Centre for Women in Science, Engineering and Technology, Cardiff Women's Workshop, the University of Salford, Sheffield Hallam University, Centre for Science Education, and ALT.

The eReturn partnership has been working with the Open Source "MyStuff" e-portfolio to support cross-institutional delivery of lifelong learning for women returners in their transition to employment.

On 25 February there will be a welcome from Julia King, Vice Chancellor of Aston University; and speakers on the two days will include on 24 February, Niall Sclater, Director of Learning Innovation at the Open University and Chair of the eReturn Steering Group, and, on 25 February Lisa Gray, JISC's specialist on ePortfolios. There will also be contributions from the main partners in the eReturn project on both days.

Julia King, Vice Chancellor of Aston University, explains, "The e-Portfolio concept is a really practical one which I am sure will appeal to women, and make a real difference in managing their careers. It is something which I would certainly have found useful in moving from role to role and between industry and academia, even without the added challenge of managing information across career breaks. I would like to encourage the widest participation in these important seminars."

Ms Clem Herman, eReturn Project Manager and Senior Lecturer, Department of Communication and Systems at The Open University, says, "Women returning to employment especially in scientific and technical fields face a lot of barriers - ePortfolios are a powerful tool to support them in preparing to return to work and in further developing their careers."

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### Notes to editors:

**Event One, on 24 February**, will be of particular interest to those developing ePortfolio systems and services within and between organisations.

It will focus on technical implementation and interoperability issues. The event will be opened by Niall Sclater, Director of Learning Innovation at the Open University and Chair of the eReturn Steering Group, and there will be input from Simon Grant from JISC CET IS, and Ross MacKenzie and Thanh Le who are leading the development of MyStuff.

**Event Two, on 25 February**, will be of interest to employers, professional bodies, careers advisors and anyone else involved in supporting returners back into employment, as well as to those wishing to increase their understanding of ePortfolio practice in general.

It will focus on the human and organisational side of using ePortfolios across institutions. The event will be opened by Julia King, Vice Chancellor of Aston University, and speakers will include Lisa Gray, who has been leading JISC's work on ePortfolios, and representatives of the main eReturn partners.

Each event can be attended separately, but for those who wish to attend both, overnight accommodation and dinner can be provided at cost.

### **About ALT**

ALT (the Association for Learning Technology) is a professional and scholarly association which brings together all those with an interest in the use of learning technology. There are over 200 organisational members from higher and further education institutions, private and public sector organisations and over 500 individual members. Sponsoring members include Becta, HEFCE, Microsoft, the Scottish Funding Council, Adobe, and the Learning and Skills Council.

ALT organises a yearly high profile conference – ALT-C, the theme for ALT-C 2009 will be *In dreams begins responsibility: choices, evidence, and change*. The conference takes place from 8-10 September 2009, Manchester, UK. <http://www.alt.ac.uk/altc2009/>

Association for Learning Technology, Gipsy Lane, Headington, Oxford, OX3 0BP  
Tel: +44 (0)1865 484 125 Fax: +44 (0)1865 484 165 Email: [admin@alt.ac.uk](mailto:admin@alt.ac.uk)  
URL: <http://www.alt.ac.uk/>

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**For media information on ALT, images or to apply for a press pass for ALT-C 2009, please contact:**

Catherine Dhanjal, TheAnswer Ltd  
Tel: 01883 650434 or 0794 166 9925  
Email: [Catherine.dhanjal@theansweruk.com](mailto:Catherine.dhanjal@theansweruk.com)