Glossary

All terms are defined here in relation to their meaning in the context of PDP and, specifically, to the meaning attached to them by this Toolkit. Alternative definitions may exist in other contexts. Readers should reinterpret terms accordingly. Cross references to other glossary terms are indicated by **bold text**.

Academic literacies approach: academic literacy may be defined as the capacity to undertake study and research, and to communicate findings and knowledge, in a manner appropriate to the particular disciplinary conventions and scholarly standards expected at university level. An 'academic literacies approach' refers to the idea of a gradual development of competence.

Action planning: a process which will help a student focus on their academic, personal and career objectives and decide what specific steps are needed in order to achieve goals. Each objective needs to have clearly defined targets with associated action points that can be realistically achieved in a specified timescale.

Bolt-on: a model of PDP that is not an integral part of, or embedded in, the academic curriculum, but runs parallel to it, perhaps as a separate module.

Career planning: a component of careers education, career development learning or career management skills provision within HE and refers to strategies an individual can usefully deploy to aid them in their pathway or progress through life.

Constructive alignment: the notion, according to Biggs (for example, Biggs, 1996) that effective teaching and learning occurs when projected learning outcomes, teaching methods and assessment protocols are designed to fit together. Thus, 'intended learning outcomes' are stated at the outset of a course of teaching that define what students are expected to be able to achieve by the end of the course; these are aligned both with the teaching methods and activities, and, crucially, with the mode of assessment and the marking criteria used for this.

Continuing professional development (CPD): the process by which employees maintain and develop professional skills and knowledge relevant to their employment and **employability**.

Curriculum mapping: a process whereby the coverage of a particular aspect of learning or teaching (here, PDP-related activities) is described in relation to curricular events such as lectures, topics and/or modules. This may be achieved by creating a grid showing diagrammatically where and when PDP-related activities take place and which may indicate developmental aspects of the coverage.

Dearing/Garrick definition (of PDP): this is the first reference to 'a means by which students can monitor, build and reflect upon their personal development' as part of Progress Files in the *National Committee of Inquiry in Higher Education Report* (1997), commonly referred to as the Dearing Report and the Scottish Committee (The Garrick Report) (1997) - see QAA (2009).

Effective learning (framework): the Effective Learning Framework, or ELF, arose from a project sponsored by QAA Scotland whose outcomes were published in 2007. It centres on a model that frames PDP in relation to effective learning. Focused Learner Questions (FLQs) are a fundamental part of ELF. The process of devising and answering these questions helps to develop the ability of the learner to 'self-audit' or 'self-review' themselves and their experiences and thereby assist **reflection**.

Embedding: the introduction of activities related to personal development planning as an integral and integrated part of the curriculum and hence, via the principle of **constructive alignment**, their inclusion within the intended earning outcomes, teaching and learning activities and, importantly, assessment.

Employability: there are many definitions of employability, but in the higher education context the following meaning is generally accepted: 'a set of skills, knowledge and personal attributes that make an individual more likely to secure and be successful in their chosen occupation(s) to the benefit of themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy' (Yorke, 2006).

Engagement of students: the act of paying full attention to, and taking part wholeheartedly in, activities (relating to PDP).

Engagement of staff: a positive attitude and commitment to the PDP concept and process.

e-portfolio: a systematic collection of digital documents and artefacts (files), created to provide evidence of a student's reflection and learning and hence a record of his/her intellectual development. These are generally linked to curricular activities and may or may not be linked to PDP activities.

Formative reflective exercises: a type of exercise that would promote a student's self-development and would not necessarily be assessed. Compare 'formative assessment' which is designed to provide learners with feedback in words on progress and inform development, but does not contribute to the overall assessment (QAA, 2000).

Graduate attributes: skills, competencies and attitudes that a graduate may be expected to have developed through higher education. These can be specific, shared or generic - see Research Teaching Linkages: Enhancing Graduate Attributes Quality Enhancement Theme (QAA, 2006c), which refers to developing a graduate who can contribute effectively to the cultural, civic, ethical, and economic future.

Graduateness: the essential attributes expected, by academia and employers, from someone graduating with a degree.

HEAR: the Higher Education Achievement Report (see Universities UK, 2007). This incorporates the original data set for the higher education transcript from the Guidelines for HE Progress Files and the requirements of the European Diploma Supplement, and proposes the recognition of a broader, verifiable, range of learner achievement by higher education providers.

Interoperability: the ability of systems (especially computer-based systems) to work together, for example, by 'seamless' exchange of information. In this context, therefore, the ability to transfer information between **PDP frameworks** or to a **CPD** scheme.

(Intended) learning outcome (ILO): a statement, generally by the teacher or organiser of a course, of what a student is expected to be able achieve by the end of the course. Sometimes referred to as a learning objective.

Marking criteria: the definitions of how the marker will reward performance in assessment, generally provided as a series of general statements attached to the different grades or grade bands in the marking system.

Marking scheme: a detailed indication of how marks will be allocated for different aspects of performance in assessment.

Metacognition; metacognitive outcomes: in the context of PDP, metacognition is about self-awareness regarding the students' learning, and their capacity to reflect on, in and for action. It is seen as subsuming elements of 'learning how to learn'; of reflection in, on and for practice; and a capacity for self-regulation (Yorke and Knight, 2004).

PDP framework(s): the scheme (or schemes) devised within an HE institution to support personal development planning. This (these) might consist of identifiable branding, such as a tag (for example 'My PDP'), a logo, a conceptual framework and corresponding resources underpinning student activities, in many cases an **e-portfolio**-based system for recording **reflection** and evidence, and, potentially, generic templates for managing the outcomes of reflection and planning.

Peer assessment: assessment involving marking by fellow students.

Personalisation: being learner-centred and responsive to individuals. There has not been as much emphasis to date within higher education as there has been in other sectors (schools) and contexts (health), but this is changing. The current situation is described fully by Knox et al (2008) and includes reference to the perception that personalisation can contribute to maximising the benefits of PDP to students.

Placement learning or practice learning: students undertake a period within a work setting as part of their HE programme.

Portability: the feature of being able to capture information from a **PDP framework** and store it, usually digitally, in a transferable (portable) medium or to transfer it to another PDP framework or to a **CPD** scheme. See also **interoperability**.

Postgraduate generic skills: (generally) the framework of skills outlined within the *Joint Statement of Skills Training Requirements of Research Postgraduate* - the joint statement of the UK Research Councils' Training Requirements for Research Students (see UK Research Councils, 2001). This sets out the skills that doctoral research students funded by the UK Research Councils would be expected to develop during their research training.

Professionalism: this is linked to the idea of certain attributes and attitudes that are integral to the professional standards endorsed by professional and statutory bodies. For example, The Royal College of Physicians defines medical professionalism as 'a set of values, behaviours, and relationships that underpins the trust the public has in doctors'. It regards 'integrity, compassion, altruism, continuous improvement, excellence and working in partnership with members of the wider healthcare team' as being vital in underpinning that professionalism.

Progress file: in the sense of **Dearing/Garrick**, a student's personal development plan and **transcript** (to be replaced by **HEAR**).

Reflective practitioner: a common term within education and health care professions. For example, reflective practitioners in medicine may review and analyse their experiences with the aim of improving their skills and enhancing their future patient care.

Reflection: the process of personal contemplation on events in the past, especially in this context, learning, and the re-evaluation of experience on the basis of these thoughts and the feelings that arise from them. **Deep reflection:** 'Reflection can be superficial and little more than descriptive or can be deep and transformative (and involved in the transformative stage of learning)' (Moon, 2001).

SMART: a model that was developed by psychologists as a tool to help people set and reach their goals (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound).

Template: in the context of **e-portfolios** and PDP, part of an e-portfolio used to store information and, potentially, content related to personal development planning. Analogous to a table in written text, this may be part-completed as a prompt to student input.

Transcript: the (developing) record of a student's achievement at university, normally validated in some way by the relevant institution. A key component of the **Progress File**.

Transition: the move into higher education from school, further education or elsewhere. The increasing diversity of learners, where they have come from and the range and diversity of higher education provision mean that this is a developing area. Potentially, PDP can support transition. There is discussion of the issues in Whittaker (2008).

Work-based learning: employees use their own work context to engage in learning which is accredited by a HE institution.