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# project connect\*ed

*Beyond the e-portfolio:*

*supporting connectivity and communities of learning in a virtual environment*

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# the context (i)

## Universities seeking to expand boundaries of student learning

- disciplinary attachments
- service, volunteer, cultural/sporting/academic exchange
- institutional initiatives  
“HKU Horizons”





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# the context (ii)

## HKU LKS Faculty of Medicine MBBS Year 3 Enrichment Year

- enhancing total learning experience and whole person development beyond the discipline and beyond borders
- one year, all students, anywhere
- 3 themes: research, service/humanitarianism, intercalation





# the gap



- How can we help students to **feel connected** when geographically distant?
- How can their disparate learning experiences **connect with** their professional goals?
- How can we help them **make connections** beyond individual, solitary reflection?

2018 Summer

START

Milestone 1

Milestone 4

2019 Summer

FINISH



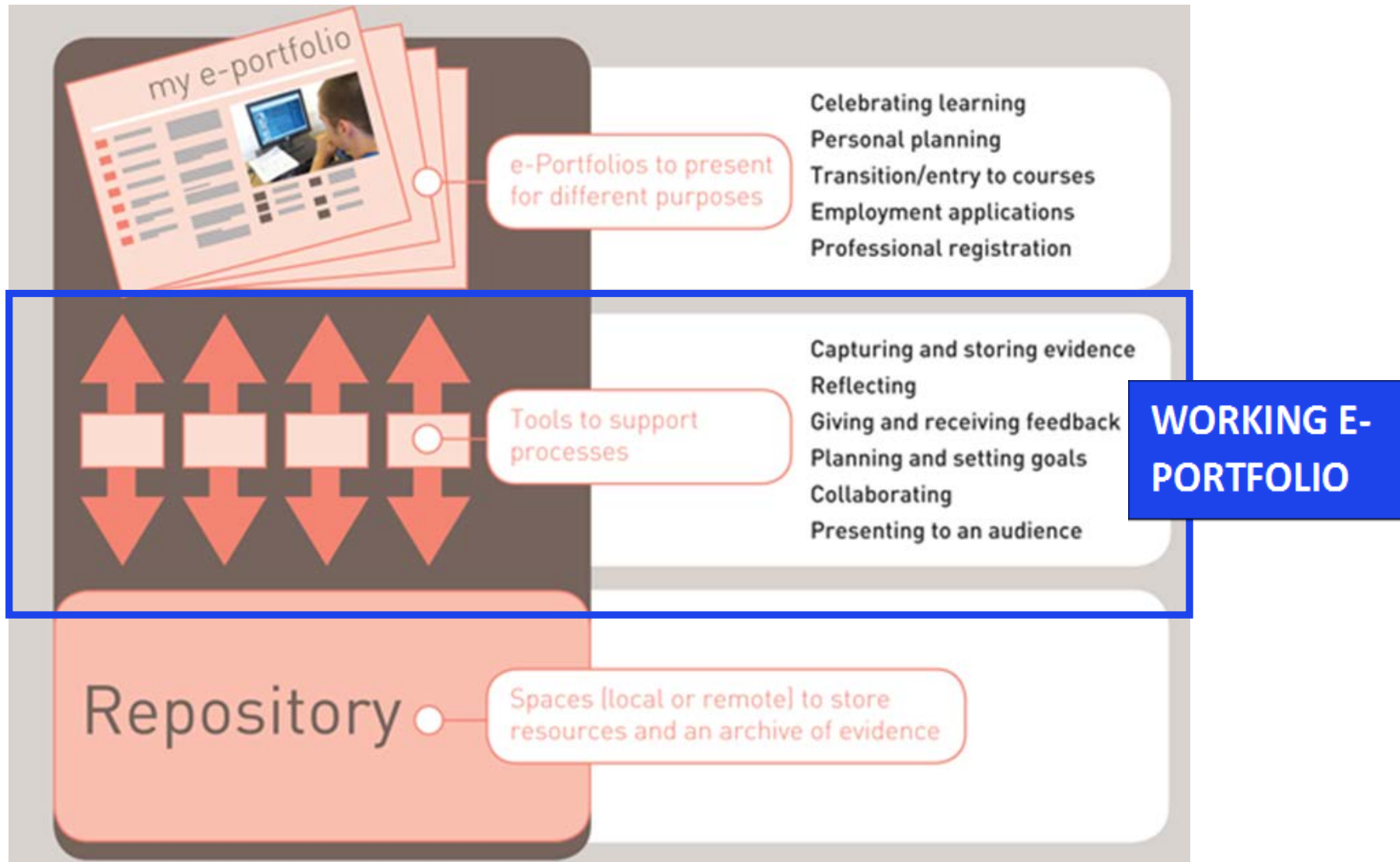


# the evidence (i)

## **E-portfolios can draw together totality of learning experience (Madden, 2015)**

- Digitized, learner-curated, promotes learning through selective compilation of accumulated evidence: a system that allows you to collect, select and reflect, showcase (Barrett, 2007)
- Focus has been on the e-portfolio as end-product, the showcase of individual's reflective endeavor (Phelan et al, 2014)

# e-portfolio system





# the evidence(ii)

## E-portfolio as a way to build community of learning (Greenberg, 2006)

- Make visible the processes of learning: discussions, feedback, reflections, collaborations= social constructivist theory that views social interaction as basis for learning (Vygotsky, 1978)
- Dialogic interaction in e-portfolio enables support and reflective learning (Olfman et al, 2010)
- EdUHK experience suggests collaborative features could be strengthened (Yang et al, 2016) but thus far not successful in HK (Deneen et al, 2014)
- Re-focus from showcase, to 'working' e-portfolio



# the evidence(iii)

## **Community of learning can coalesce around common goals (Lave & Wenger, 1991)**

- University aims/ institutional learning outcomes (critical inquiry, tackling ill-defined problems, professional ethics, intercultural understanding, global citizenship etc.)
- What does this have to do with being a doctor?

## **Trigger the learning with an inquiry-based approach (Lazonder et al, 2016)**

- Evidence-based paedagogy that is effective provided students are supported with guidance



# the goal

To enhance and support the student learning experience during their enrichment year - intellectually, academically, psychologically and socially by

- developing a **virtual collaborative space** for support and for learning
- building a **community of learning** that coalesces around common goals

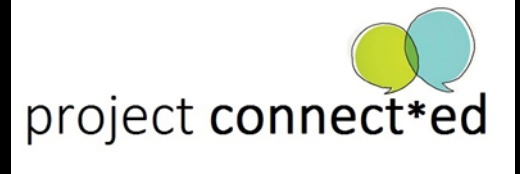


# the plan (i)

## **Developing a virtual collaborative space:**

- a natural extension of students' virtual lives
- user-friendly and mobile enabled
- allows multiple team formation, collaboration
- allows multimedia, archiving, sharing, exporting
- adaptation of social collaborative tools/ e-platforms
- integrates with into existing apps/software and systems

Introducing.....



Supporting e-communities of learning



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# the plan (ii)

## Building a community of learning around common goals

- why does each student's unique experience matter in becoming a doctor
- how do these experiences contribute to the expected attributes a university graduate should have



## roles of a doctor

1. Medical Expert
2. Communicator/  
Educator
3. Humanist
4. Collaborator
5. Health Advocate
6. Resource Manager
7. Learner
8. Scientist/ Scholar
9. Individual

## university educational aims

1. Critical inquiry & lifelong learning
2. Tackling novel situations & ill-defined problems
3. Self-reflection, understanding others, ethics
4. Intercultural communication, global citizenship
5. Communication, collaboration
6. Leadership & advocacy for improving human condition



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**inquiry pods**  
built around  
educational  
aims  
and  
professional  
goals

Set of tasks/ guiding  
questions for selection by  
the group

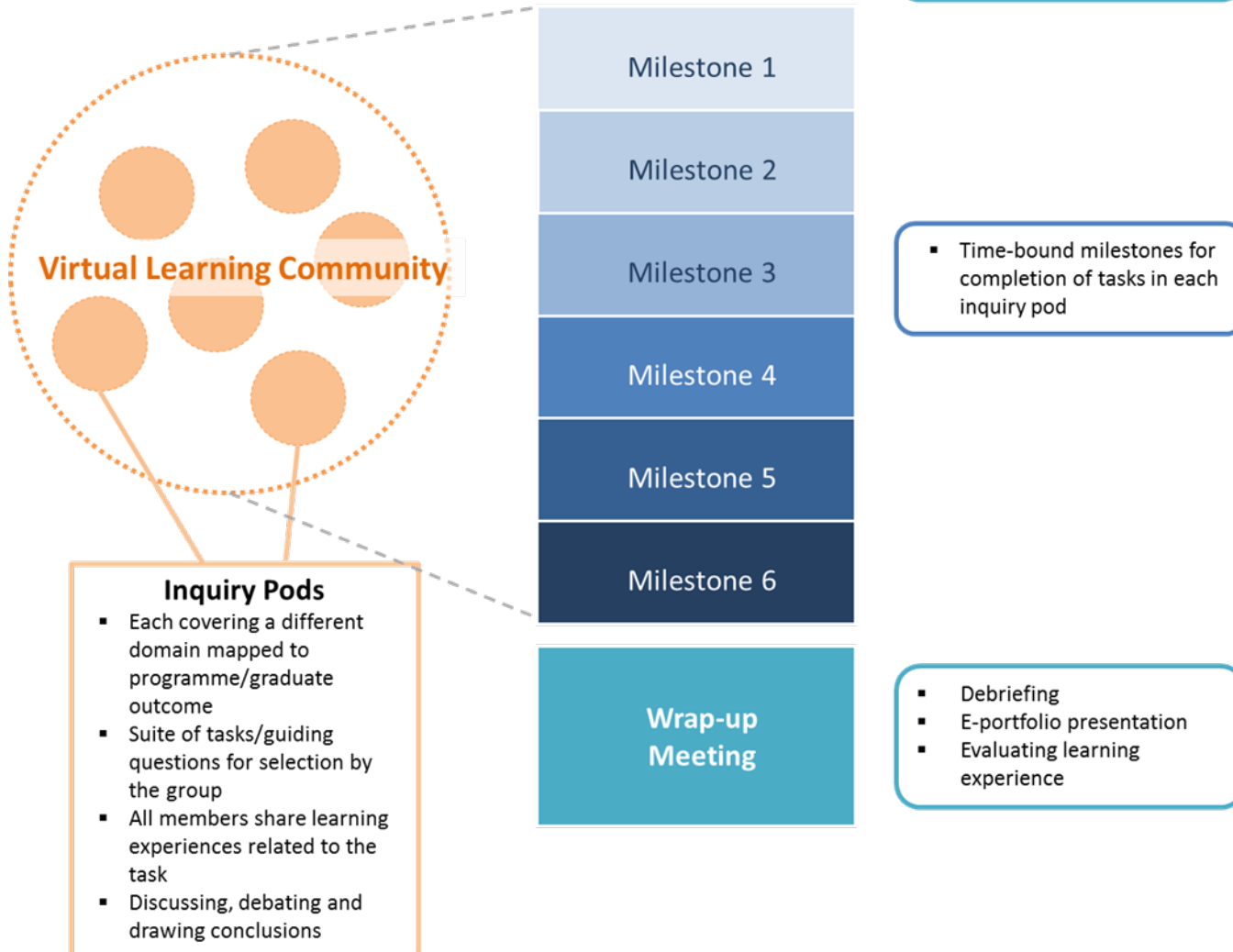
All group members share  
experiences and insights  
related to the task/  
question

Discuss, debate and draw  
conclusions

Collective response

# Virtual Community of Learning

**10 students +1 mentor per group**  
**23 groups**





# the next steps (i)

## Virtual collaborative space

-evaluate, adapt and pilot test existing technology (students, teachers, tech experts)

e.g. online collaborative tools (Slack, Trello, Yammer...) e.g. e-portfolios /website/blogs: Pebblepad, Digication, Google sites, Wordpress...

## Inquiry pods

-robust educational framework: inquiry based learning underpinned by educational theory (social constructivist)

-develop content and assess feasibility (educationalists, teachers, students)



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# the next steps (ii)

## Promotion and engagement

- branding, visibility and ownership

## Mentor

- identification of at least 23 mentors (Faculty teachers)
- faculty development (facilitation and inquiry based learning, social and psychological support, use of e-platform)

## Group formation and meet-your-mentor

- after Enrichment Year selections confirmed, to form groups of comprised of students planning diverse experiences



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# the next steps (iii)

## Research questions

How feasible and effective is this virtual learning space in engaging students and supporting their learning?

How does this approach affect students social learning, sense of community and motivation to learn?

## Conference

Virtual learning spaces and communities of learning



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# acknowledgement

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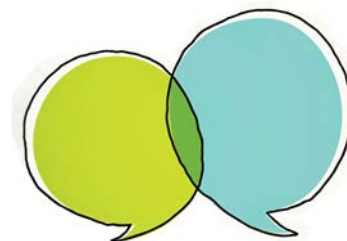
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## thank you!

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