



The Learning Experience Portfolio with
Authentic 360°-Feedback

Fostering Learner Agency Through Flexible, Development-Oriented & Portfolio-Based Education

*A Long-Term Partnership Between the University of
Applied Sciences of Amsterdam (HvA) and Portflow
with a Focus on Co-Creation*

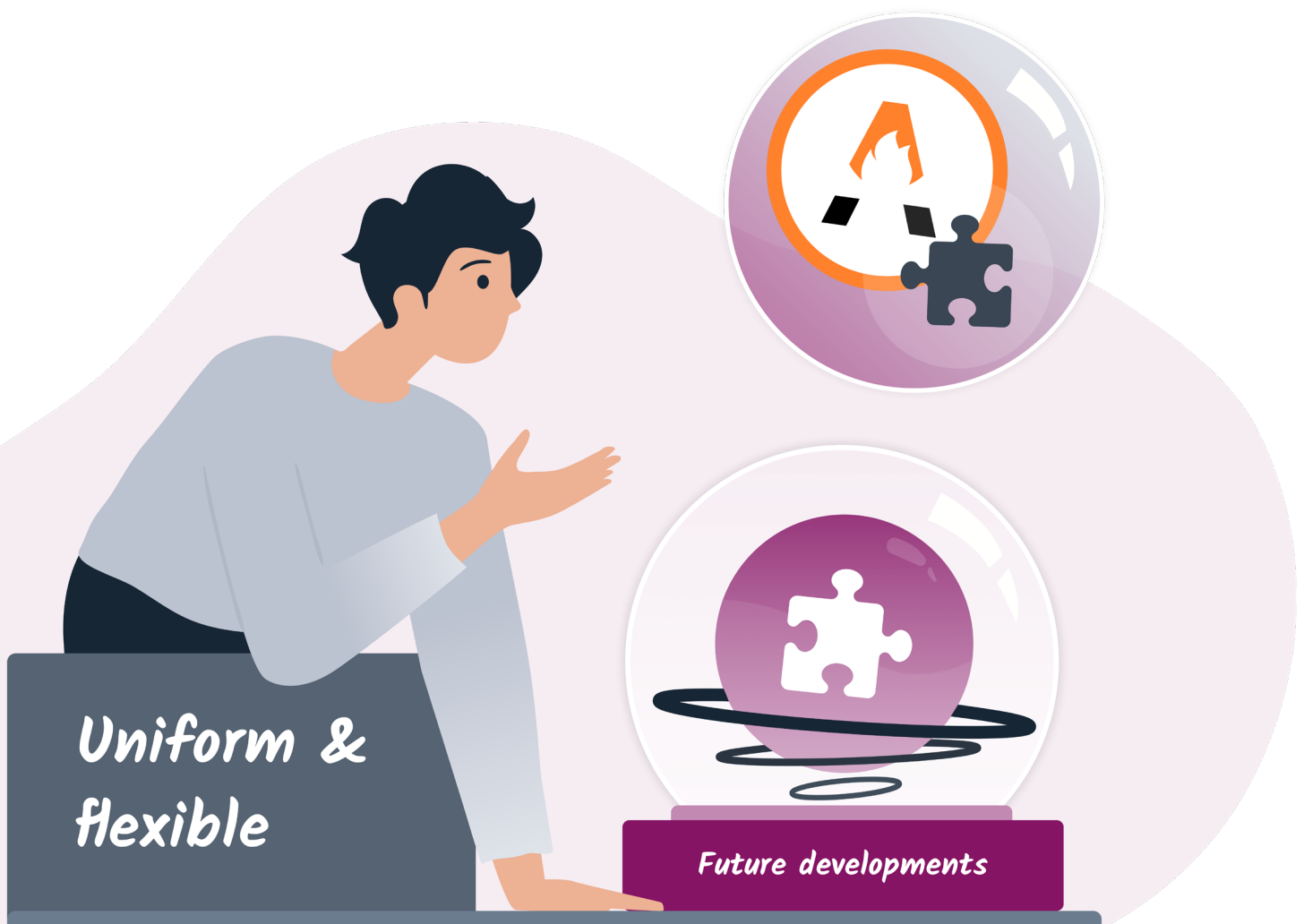


1. Summary

In line with their new education and assessment policy drawn up in 2022, the Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences (HvA) aims to give students more control over their own learning process. This requires a tool that gives students ownership and supports them in their development.

The HvA chose Portflow because it appeared to best suit their desire for a uniform, but flexible solution that is compatible with their current LMS Brightspace and helps to fulfill the modern educational vision. and is prepared for future developments in education. In collaboration with Drieam, Portflow was successfully implemented throughout the institution. Now Portflow, in combination with the LMS, plays an important role in encouraging student ownership and involvement in their own learning journey.

In this case study we highlight the long-term collaboration between the Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences (HvA) and Portflow and, among other things, we consider the added value of co-creation. This case study underlines how collaboration between an educational institution and an innovative EdTech partner can lead to solutions that contribute to sustainable and flexible education, where students are optimally prepared for the constantly changing demands of a dynamic labor market.



2. The Educational Institution: Get to Know the HvA

Hogeschool van Amsterdam (HvA)

The Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences (HvA) trains students to get the best out of themselves. Students, employees and (Amsterdam) society strengthen each other in a continuous interaction between education, research and professional practice. With more than a hundred higher education programmes and more than 44,000 students, the HvA is connected to professional practice and current social issues within and outside the city.

From 2022 onwards, various HvA employees have been closely involved in the search for and implementation of a portfolio solution. Three of these are discussed in this case study. We would like to introduce them to you:



Pieter van Langen

DOMAIN LEAD EDUCATION AT THE ICT DEPARTMENT

Pieter is product owner of the Digital Learning Environment (DLO) and a member of the DLO Board of the HvA. He was the initiator and driving force behind the portfolio project. With the DLO Board, he ensured that a study was conducted to explore whether the needs of the HvA's new education and testing policy were in line with the market offering. He then set up the tender and implementation process.



Jan-Pieter Zuiderveen

EDUCATIONAL CONSULTANT DIGITAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT (DLO)
AT HVA

As a technical specialist and executive project leader, Jan-Pieter, together with Mieke Willering and the Drieam Project Manager, was responsible for the central management of the project. He involved the right people at the right time, such as the Functional Management department for the technical part of the implementation.



Sanne Hayes

LECTURER & IMPLEMENTATION SUPERVISOR EDUCATIONAL
INNOVATION (FACULTY OF HEALTH, SPORT & MOVEMENT)

After the tender process, Sanne took charge of the didactic implementation within the various courses of her faculty. Thanks to her years of experience as a teacher, she knows exactly what it takes to properly inform the education team and get them involved in a change process.

🎓 More than a hundred colleges
🎓 Over 44,000 students



3. The Challenge: Development-oriented Assessment in a Heterogeneous Educational Landscape

The labor market is changing rapidly. In 2025, this evolution could be faster than ever, thanks to digitalization, globalization, climate change and - more recently - the arrival of AI. Lifelong Development has become an integral part of every professional's career. To prepare students for such a dynamic career, taking responsibility for their own learning during and after their education is an important condition.

Giving students more control over their learning journey allows them to take greater ownership of their development, empowering them to take responsibility for their lifelong learning journey. Scaffolding – providing the right support at the right moment by a teacher or coach – is crucial to this process.

This sounds simple in principle, but in practice it requires a clear vision of student management and a learning solution that can translate these ideals into reality. The Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences (HvA) also recognizes this challenge and started looking for a suitable software solution in 2023.

Why a central portfolio solution?

Pieter van Langen, Domain Lead Education at the ICT Service of the HvA, explains: “A new education and assessment policy has been drawn up within the HvA in close collaboration with the faculties. This consists of five concrete agreements on which our activities and efforts are based:



1. We give the student control over their own learning path



2. We work in learning communities



3. We test and assess developmentally



4. We offer activating education



5. We use test formats that are representative of the profession

At the moment, modern LMS platforms are falling short of meeting the first and third principles in practice. Meanwhile, more and more programs at HvA expressed the urgent need for a digital portfolio application that allows students to take ownership of their development and track their progress. While the programs vary significantly in content and teaching style, this was a key driver for us to find a central solution together.”

4. The Requirements: Flexibility, Compatibility and Future-orientedness

The HvA formulated three important requirements that the desired portfolio tool had to meet:

1



Uniform and flexible

HvA sought a unified software solution that could be used across all programs. However, this didn't mean that every program had the same requirements or used the portfolio in the same way. Pieter explains: "The extent to which students can take ownership varies by program. The content differences between programs are vast. Some are more creative, others more technical. In IT programs, changes in the job market occur quickly, while physiotherapy is a more established field. However, there is still room for choice and specialization in these programs, where students can take more control, and a portfolio adds value." A key requirement was that the portfolio software could be applied across various teaching formats.

2



Integrated with the LMS

HvA uses D2L's Brightspace LMS and sought a portfolio solution that integrates well with it. Pieter: "The LMS is the heart of our education, but it has its limitations. It is built to share information from the teacher to the student, but not the other way around. There was a gap in providing an environment where the student can work independently. The essence is that we wanted a development and assessment portfolio that is generically applicable but also serves as an extension of the LMS. We wanted to connect those worlds."

3



Prepared for the future

Lastly, HvA recognized that the rapid changes in the job market also require quick adaptations in the education system. The employability of graduates largely depends on how well their education aligns with the labor market. HvA sought an application that not only met their current educational goals but is also future-proof and continuously developed. Pieter: "We were looking for a proactive and innovative partner who continually improves and evolves the product in line with HvA's vision, needs, and requirements."

5. The Solution: A Flexible Digital Portfolio That Seamlessly Integrates with the LMS

This search led HvA, after a tender process, to the development and assessment portfolio Portflow. Not only did Portflow meet the requirements mentioned above, but there was also a strong connection with Drieam as the implementation, co-creation, and innovation partner.

Portflow

Portflow is a plug-in (LTI app) that enables students to take control of their own development journey. In Portflow, students make their learning goals visible, provide evidence of their progress, and can request feedback from teachers, peers, and experts. In this way, students simultaneously build a rich assessment dossier. Teachers can provide scaffolding and feedback in various formats (e.g., written, spoken, supported by videos, etc.).

Thanks to Portflow's modular structure, each program can determine how the digital portfolio is applied within the curriculum (Requirement #1). Students use the application within the interface of their familiar LMS, offering both seamless visual integration and functional connectivity (Requirement #2). Finally, Portflow's functionalities are regularly expanded in collaboration with HvA, ensuring it continues to meet the educational vision (Requirement #3).

Portflow thus provides a powerful solution to the challenges where the LMS falls short: the digital portfolio puts the student in control of their learning journey, making learning goals, development, and feedback visible.



Drieam

Drieam helps educational institutions prepare future-ready professionals. With our passion for educational innovation, we work every day with enthusiasm to develop our software solutions, such as Portflow. As an EdTech provider, Drieam has been collaborating with Dutch higher and vocational education institutions for over 11 years, enabling seamless connections with various LMS platforms like Brightspace, Canvas, Blackboard, or Moodle.

6. The Implementation: “Good Preparation is Essential”

Central implementation

Portflow offers seamless integration with various LMS platforms, including Brightspace, Canvas, Blackboard, and Moodle. The technical framework can be set up within hours at the start of a new implementation. However, this is only the beginning. There are endless ways to apply a digital portfolio in practice. Defining this didactic approach, alongside the technical implementation, is a critical component of the project.



This didactic approach was largely outlined in the tender documentation. At the start of the project, it was further refined within the core team and then shared in a working group with representatives from the various faculties. Jan-Pieter, along with colleague Mieke, led this working group. He explains:



“We quickly realized that each faculty had its own teaching style. That style is crucial in determining how a portfolio can be used. So, we worked with Drieam to create a format that allowed faculties and programs to discuss and define their ideal approach.”

“We also created a timeline to identify which stakeholders need to be involved at each stage of the process. In collaboration with Drieam, we developed standard communication materials explaining what Portflow is, why it aligns with our policy, and how the roadmap will look for each program.” says **Jan-Pieter**.

Decentralized implementation within the faculties

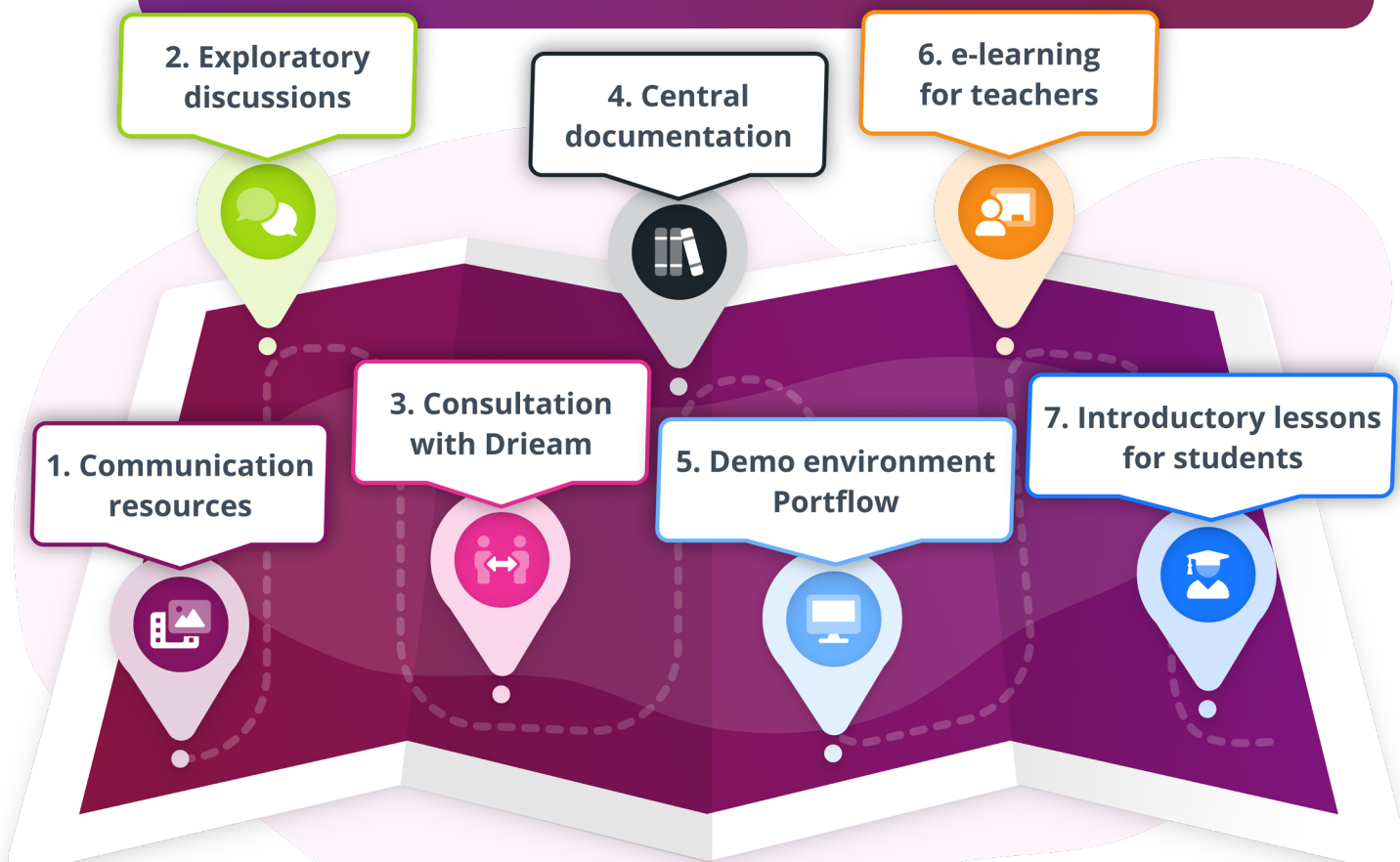
Sanne Hayes, Educational Innovation Facilitator at the Faculty of Health, Sports & Exercise, took responsibility for the decentralized implementation of Portflow within her faculty: "This was my starting point to engage in discussions and explore how we could integrate the portfolio into our programs."

Drieam supported in various ways during this phase. Sanne: "First, I used an animation to introduce Portflow clearly: what is it, how does it work, and why would we want to apply it in the programmes? Drieam also assisted at key moments in the integration of Portflow into the various curricula. Lastly, they set up a demo environment to bring the agreements we made to life in an example portfolio."

Sanne even prepared her own e-learning module to introduce Portflow to teachers:



"It was important for teachers to familiarize themselves with all the functionalities so they could properly inform the students. We developed various instructional lessons that take students through working with Portflow in a structured timeline. We also stored as much information as possible in a Teams environment as a reference guide. It was a real milestone when that was set up."



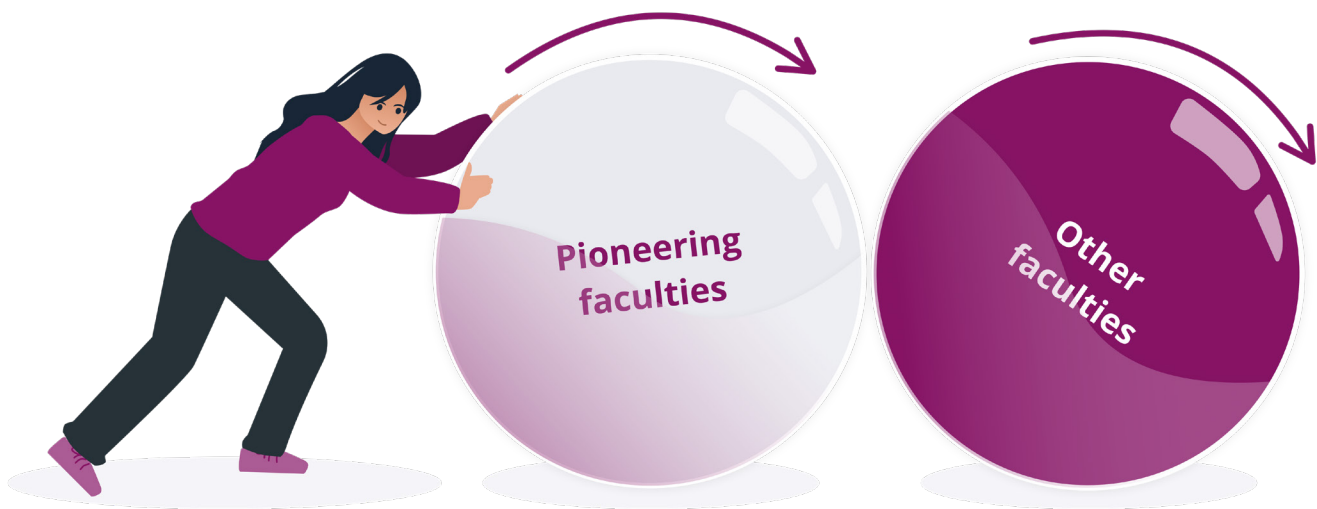
Components implementation plan

Rollout phase

The first rollout phase started in September 2023, with one course within each faculty working with Portflow. This involved courses of different sizes. Sanne:



“After a few months we evaluated this with the faculties. We then made a very clear inventory of the desired adjustments together with Drieam. Thanks to the rapid collaboration with Drieam, we have really been able to do something with the feedback from the pioneering courses. That created a lasting positive atmosphere.”



The majority of these adjustments had already been rolled out in the second semester of that school year. The first rollout phase emphasizes the importance of open communication within the institution. Sanne explains:



“I would like to say to others who are considering a portfolio solution: don’t just think about the technical implementation, but also think about the didactic implementation. Involve the right people at an early stage and let them think about the role of the portfolio in the curriculum. Drieam can be a good sparring partner in this. Make the process transparent and communicate about it clearly with teachers and students - after all, they have to work with it. An open attitude is important. Give teachers an entrance. ‘Do you not understand something? No problem! Come by and I will explain it to you, so that you can be well prepared for your lesson.’ They must feel supported in working with Portflow.”

Long-term cooperation

To ensure continued use of Portflow even after the implementation process, Drieam and HvA follow a fixed consultation cycle at various levels:



Monthly **operational meetings** between HvA's project team and Drieam's Customer Success Manager (CSM) to discuss daily operations and any open support requests.



Quarterly **tactical meetings** with HvA's Contract Manager and Product Owner, as well as Drieam's CSM and Product Manager, to monitor results, review the roadmap, and discuss any expansion proposals.



Biannual **strategic meetings** to evaluate the partnership and align long-term visions and developments.

Besides this, co-creation sessions also take place on a flexible basis, where we explore the wishes and solutions in more depth on specific topics, and thus shape the further development in terms of content through intensive collaboration.



Jan-Pieter Zuiderveen (HvA): "Working with Drieam has been very direct and equal. Many companies maintain contact heavily during the first six months but then lose focus. From the start, the foundation was strong, based on trust. That trust remains. Even when things aren't perfect, we know that we'll be heard, taken seriously, and that it will be resolved."



7. The Results: More Insights for and Involvement of the Student

8.800 students within the HvA now work with Portflow, spread across **60+ programmes**.

Realized in the first year of co-creation:

- **25 new features**
- **31 improvements to existing features**

Portflow is applied by default within **all programmes** from the faculty of Health, Sport & Exercise.

Success factors

HvA set up a **successful implementation plan** in collaboration with Drieam that can also be applied by other programmes in the near future.

The largest training course that uses Portflow (Physiotherapy) has a **intake of +-550 students per year** and applies the portfolio in all courses.

Within the faculty where Sanne works, all programs now use Portflow. The two largest programs, Physiotherapy and Nutrition & Dietetics, enroll between 450 and 550 students annually. These programs have fully structured their education as portfolio-based education and now apply Portflow in all courses. Other programs use Portflow for specific years or units of study.



Sanne: “We evaluate every semester with all programs and align the results with Drieam. They provide us with advice or point out how we can best meet our needs with Portflow’s current functionalities. If that’s not enough, we work together with Drieam to develop new features through co-creation. For example, we are currently working on integrating an AI module to make grading easier for teachers.”

Integrating AI while maintaining data sovereignty

Pieter J. Smits (*Product manager of Portflow at Drieam*) talks about the integration with artificial intelligence:



“The AI module that we developed in collaboration with the HvA provides a quick insight into a student’s talents and challenges with regard to a specific learning goal. The module analyzes all relevant feedback. This is then summarized, taking into account the different perspectives from which the feedback was given and the student’s development over time.”

“The special thing about this integration is that we have the analysis carried out by a Large Language Model (LLM) that falls under the educational institution’s own data management. This gives HvA legal and technical control over its own data processed by the AI module. In this way, HvA has full control over user data while also keeping control of costs. After all, these do not have to be charged through the supplier.”

✦ AI analysis



Talents

- **Thorough research skills:** *You have chosen strong and reliable academic sources, and you demonstrate the ability to effectively analyze and integrate this information into your own work.*

Challenges

- **Increase depth of analysis:** *Try to go beyond explaining theories and focus more on critically evaluating different perspectives and their implications.*

Portflow involves the student in their own learning journey

In the first year of adoption, Portflow made an important contribution to realizing the HvA’s educational vision. Sanne: “The tool helps us communicate curriculum expectations more clearly to students and makes the connection between various assignments and learning outcomes more transparent. Students understand better why they’re doing what they’re doing. They can view their development regarding the various learning outcomes, making it easier to identify areas where topics or skills have been underdeveloped. This helps them understand professional requirements in their field better.”

This insight is a key step toward student ownership. Sanne agrees: “After a year working with Portflow, I’m particularly excited about the opportunities it provides our students. They become more engaged with the education. Education is also theirs, not just the teachers’. That should be the goal anyway.”

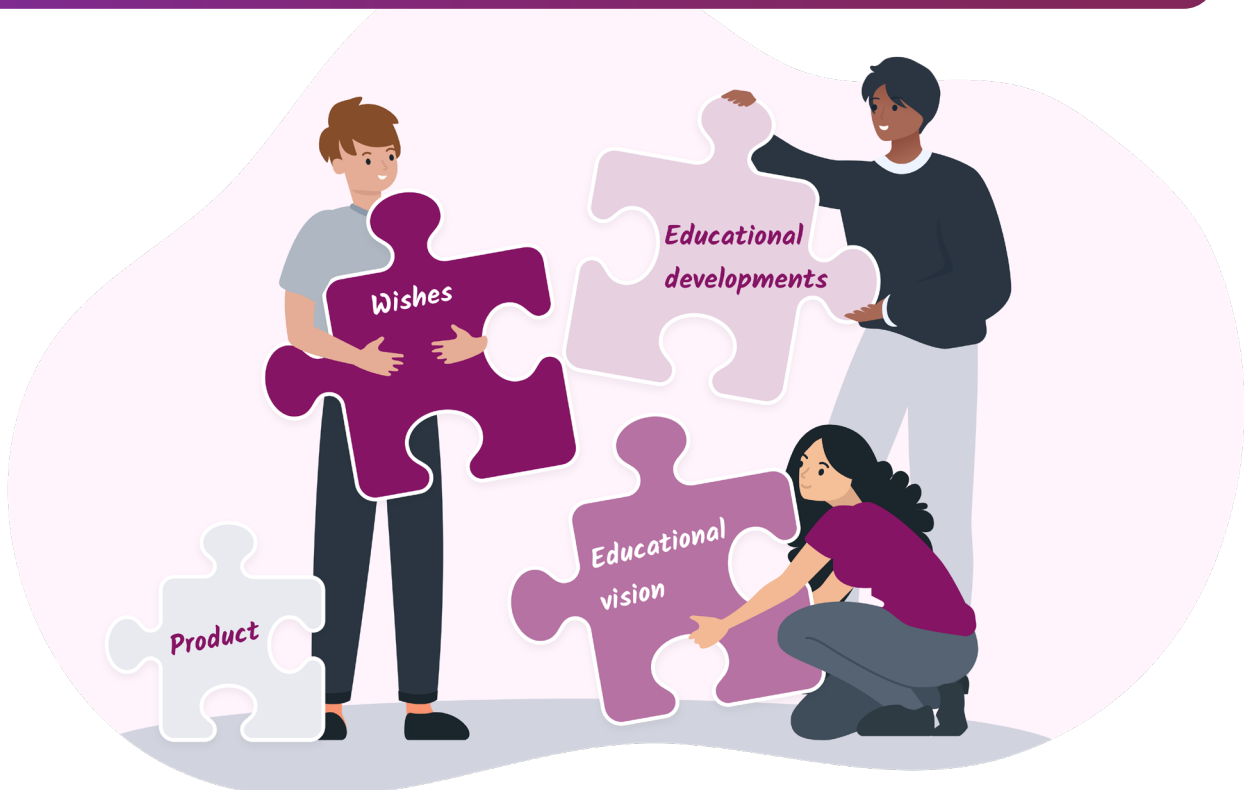
Co-creation

When co-creating (functionalities within) a software solution, important stakeholders are involved in the design process. We are convinced that co-creation with educational institutions is essential to create a product that delivers added value in practice.



Pieter J. Smits (Drieam): “There are several developments within education that require our attention. By regularly organizing sparring sessions in which both HvA and Drieam can discuss a joint educational vision, the sword cuts both ways: Portflow becomes a more versatile and complete product and at the same time meets even more customer wishes. The most important result is that the program supports the student even better.”

Jan-Pieter Zuiderveen (HvA): “It’s unique how we can collaboratively go through the development of new features in an iterative way. In education, the challenge often lies in translating educational needs into concrete functionalities. In our partnership with Drieam, we place a lot of focus on refinement and practical application, which ultimately delivers the best results. As a result, we now have a portfolio tool that meets our requirements, while Drieam has a great product to further roll out to other institutions.”



8. The Future: “Give Students the Space to Prove Themselves”

With the adoption of Portflow, the HvA is making a significant step towards development-oriented education. The coming years will primarily focus on rolling out Portflow across all programmes, ultimately enabling a large portion of HvA students to track their development within Portflow.

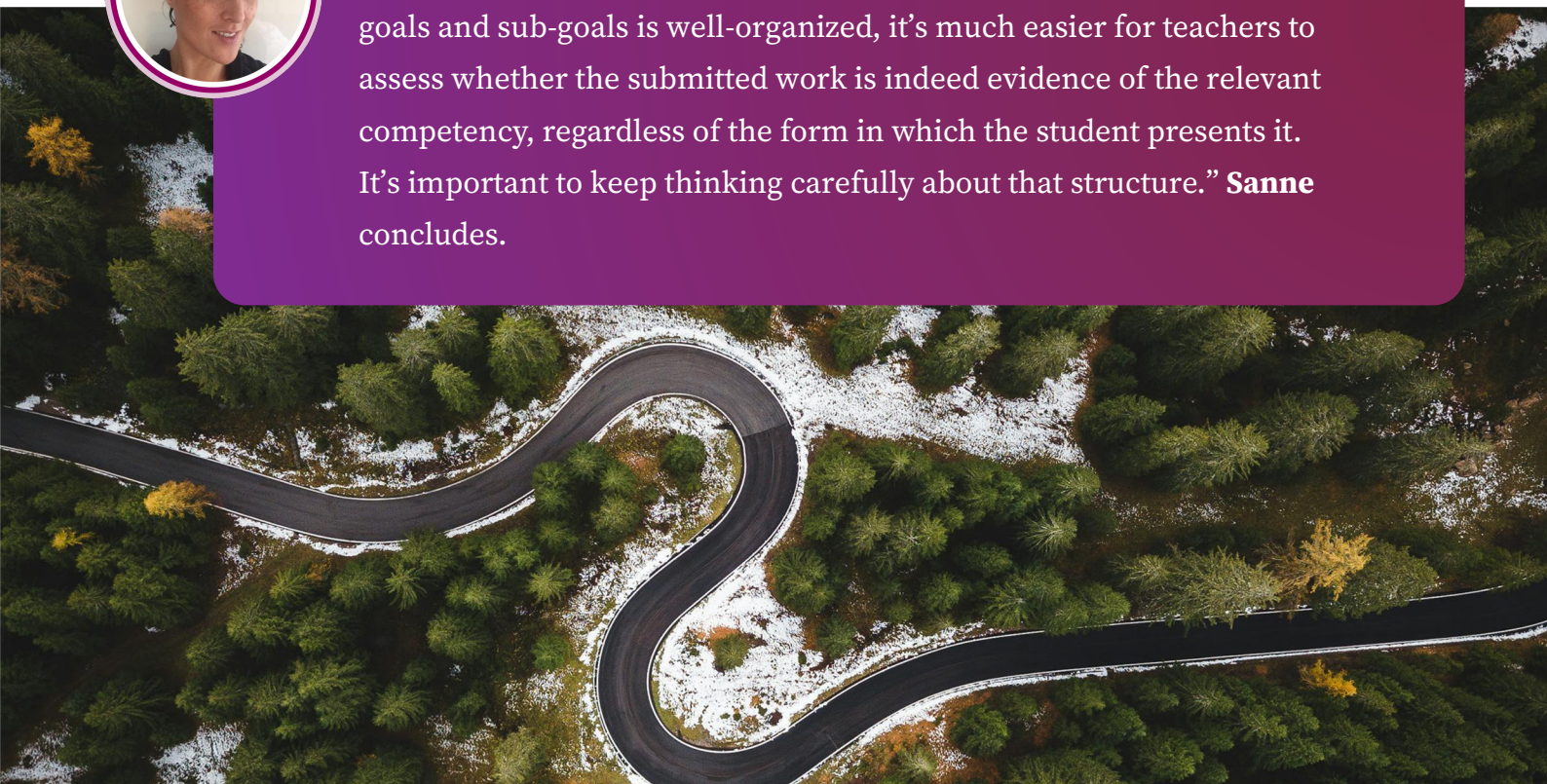
Additionally, Sanne emphasizes the importance of better utilizing the capabilities Portflow already offers: “I hope that in the future, our students will be given the space and freedom to truly take ownership. Portflow already provides those opportunities, but it’s also up to the teachers to give students the confidence to showcase their work in their portfolio and demonstrate their professional competencies. A cultural shift among teachers is crucial for this.”

She also anticipates that the portfolio students build during their studies will increasingly serve as a guide for demonstrating competencies in their professional lives. “As long as you’re working within a certain field, the various competencies and skills will naturally remain relevant. The portfolio will essentially become an interactive CV. We’re also trying to define competencies within different programmes in a way that aligns with European standards, so other educational institutions are more likely to recognize previously attained or proven competencies.”

Sanne believes that in the future, tools like Portflow could also help reduce teachers’ workload, but this requires a solid structure.



“Whatever a student creates, they do it to achieve a specific part of their education or to demonstrate a particular skill. When the structure of goals and sub-goals is well-organized, it’s much easier for teachers to assess whether the submitted work is indeed evidence of the relevant competency, regardless of the form in which the student presents it. It’s important to keep thinking carefully about that structure.” **Sanne** concludes.



In this Case Study, you read how the HvA has empowered students to take control of their own development with the help of Portflow.

Curious about how Portflow can also enable programmatic assessment and development-oriented education within your institution? Visit our website at www.drieam.com/portflow. Learn more about Portflow, explore all its features, and schedule a free, no-obligation demonstration with one of our product experts. We're happy to think along with you!



Put your students in the driver's seat of their education with a learning experience portfolio that they *truly* own.

Discover everything about Portflow, take a tour, or book a free online demo for you and your colleagues by scanning the QR code or visiting the website.

