

Updates

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August 2019 Update

Page header update

The page header area was revamped to allow for a full-width page header when in display mode of a page. This is the first step towards further changes to improve the look of a page.

The buttons stick on the right-hand side of a page and stay in place when the page is scrolled for easy access.

Header area of a portfolio page with new buttons on the side

The profile page shows a few more buttons for the various actions that can be taken on the page, depending on who is viewing the page.

Header area of a profile page with new buttons on the side

SmartEvidence editor

You can create, edit, and copy SmartEvidence frameworks directly in Folioz as site administrator. The SmartEvidence editor makes it possible. You can still upload existing framework files, but can also take advantage of a visual editor filling in the framework details into a form.

Fill in a form to set up a SmartEvidence framework

Fill in a form to set up a SmartEvidence framework

Open links in a new tab or window

Links to external web sites are opened automatically in a new tab or window, depending on your browser settings. You can also open Mahara pages in a new tab if you like when you set up your link in the visual editor.

Open links in a new tab or window

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Upgrade to Bootstrap 4

Folioz now uses Bootstrap 4 for theming taking advantage of changes and new functionality available in this responsive framework.

Forum enhancements

Enhancements have been made to the discussion forums in groups to offer additional features allowing group administrators more control over subscriptions and posts, especially in large groups and when groups are used in more formal learning settings:

- Forum posts can have file attachments.
- Forum posts can be placed into a moderation queue for approval before being sent out to all subscribers.
- Staff and administrators can set up forums that don't allow group members to unsubscribe.

Consolidation of “People” and “Groups”

The navigation areas of “My friends” and “Find people” have merged to “People” and “My groups” and “Find groups” have merged into “Groups”.

New menu items in the main menu

New menu items in the main menu

That makes it easier to search for and find relevant people and groups without needing to choose beforehand what to look for.

Merged “Find groups” and “My groups”

Isolated institutions

Isolated institutions allows for better separation between institutions. This is beneficial when privacy requires that people of different institutions shall not be able to contact each other or share portfolios.

Support Badgr for open badges

If you have an account on [Badgr](#), you can display open badges from that account's public collections in Folioz. You need to [set up a connection](#) to Badgr for that to work.

Linking Badgr to Mahara

Add navigation block to all pages in a collection

When you add the “Navigation” block to a page that is in a collection, you can add the block to all other existing pages within that collection automatically.

Add the “Navigation” block to all collection pages

Show person who uploaded a group file

When you upload a file to a group, the group becomes the owner of the file. Now you can see who uploaded the file in the group’s file area as well as when you view the details of a file when coming from a group page.

Show who uploaded a group file

Navigation changes

The main menu navigation has changed and the items re-arranged. Feedback from people using Folioz has shown that the previous division of “Content” and “Portfolios” was not ideal and that it was hard to find things. The new main menu matches the 3 main areas of Folioz:

- Create: Create and upload artefacts, and create portfolios
- Share: Share portfolios and view shared portfolios
- Engage: Engage and collaborate with others in groups

The additional item of “Manage” was added for the items that did not fit in any of these categories.

Main menu navigation

Populate a page automatically with tagged content

If you tagged content, e.g. files, journal entries, or plans, and blocks, then you can create a new page based on that tagged content. Choose the tag or tags for which you want to see all content items. They will be added to the page automatically.

You can then arrange the resulting blocks as you like or remove them.

Set up institution tags

Institution administrators can set up any number of 'official' tags. These can be used by institution members to ensure that they are using the correct tags at all times. Institution tags cannot be edited by institution members.

View someone else's content based on a tag

If you are on a portfolio page by somebody else, and you want to know all the content that they have tagged with a specific tag, you can click the tag at the artefact or the page and see a list of all content items with that tag to which you have access.

Support the creation of templates more

There are a number of new features that support the creation and use of templates. These features are geared towards scaffolding the portfolio creation process and give people who are new to portfolios or need to create a compliance portfolios tools at hand to facilitate their work.

- **Blocks in all contexts:** Blocks that could only be used by individuals can be put onto group, institution, and site pages for easier copying. While content may often not be added itself, the block can be prepared for the people using the template.
- **Page instructions:** Pages can be set up with instructions that sit at the top of the page rather than needing to use a block for that.
- **Lock blocks:** You can lock blocks to a page preventing their deletion from the page. While a portfolio author can remove the lock, at first look it is not possible to delete the blocks.
- **Copy group portfolios automatically:** You can copy a group portfolio automatically into the accounts of existing group members. Administrators and tutors are excluded from the copying.

Submit a portfolio via LTI to an LMS

Personal portfolios can be submitted to an LTI-enabled learning management system (LMS). Assignments are set up in the LMS with the connection to Folioz. Portfolios are graded in Folioz, and the grade is transferred to the LMS via LTI. These portfolios can be archived in Folioz automatically if needed.

[Grade a portfolio submitted via the LMS](#)

View old versions of a page on the timeline

You can save versions of your portfolio to your page timeline and jump back to old versions. This allows you to see how your portfolio has developed over time, what you have added, and what you have deleted.

[Jump between old versions of a portfolio](#)

Make a peer assessment

Peers can perform a blind review of a portfolio authors skills and competencies when the “Peer assessment” block is on a page. They are not able to see any content of the person they are assessing. Peer assessments can be saved as drafts before making them available to the portfolio author and others.

[Add and view a peer assessment](#)

Sign off and verify a portfolio page

When portfolios don't use SmartEvidence for assessment purposes, it's still good to know which pages are ready for review and when they can be sent for assessment. That is where the sign-off and verification functionality comes in.

Adding that to a page allows the portfolio author to sign off their page indicating to a selected manager that their portfolio is ready for review. If required, the manager can then verify the content showing that they are happy for the portfolio to be taken to the next step in the evaluation process.

[Sign off and verification of a portfolio](#)

Revoke access to portfolios containing objectionable material

An institution or site administrator can revoke access to a portfolio temporarily when it was reported as containing objectionable material. While the portfolio is under review, nobody who would normally have access to it are able to view it until the administrator is satisfied that all objectionable material has been dealt with.

This allows the administrator to communicate with the portfolio author directly through Folioz and also view a report of all current objectionable material.

[Revoke access to a portfolio containing objectionable material](#)

Update plan tasks directly on a page

You can update the status of a plan task or [edit tasks of a plan](#) directly from a portfolio page making it faster to keep your plan up to date.

[Edit a plan on a page](#)

May 2020 Updates

Placeholder block

When you create a page, you do not have to decide on the block type from the start but can put a [placeholder block](#) onto the page instead. This is a great improvement for those working with templates as they can create the structure of a page and then let the learners decide what type of content they want to place into the individual sections.

~~Put a placeholder block onto a page~~

Put a placeholder block onto a page

More flexible layout

When you have a block on a page, you can [instantly change its size](#). Grab the arrow handles and resize it. You can also still move it around a page and align other blocks to it seeing changes instantly.

An accessible option to make changes via the keyboard only is available.

~~Change the layout directly~~ from the edit screen

Change the layout directly from the edit screen

Comment on content without leaving the page

When you want to comment on a piece of learning evidence, [click the evidence itself](#) if it is an image or linked otherwise and you'll see details about that evidence and can comment on it if the portfolio author enabled comments. There are no more "Add comment" and "Details" link below each artefact.

~~Click an image or a linked~~ artefact to see its details

Click an image or a linked artefact to see its details

Details mode

Some artefacts are not so easily accessible for comments. In those cases, enter the details mode by clicking the “[Details](#)” button in the button bar and the blocks or individual pieces of evidence that have more information available are highlighted. You can then click on the comments and details bar to view metadata and leave comments.

Click the “[Details](#)” button to enter the details mode

Click the “[Details](#)” button to enter the details mode

Add a page header background

You can change the background of the header area of a page if your site allows the use of [skins](#). Select a background colour and make sure that the text colour matches and is readable. When you view your page with that skin applied, you will see the change instantly. You can then apply that skin to any of your other pages that should have the same header.

Change the colour of the page header area

Change the colour of the page header area

You can also upload a background image to the header area. For best results, make sure to follow the sizing instructions. You may also need to try a few variations to see which one works best.

Change the background of the page header area

Change the background of the page header area

It is possible to also use theme fonts in skins now.

Assignment plans

It is possible to create plans in your personal portfolio area that serve as templates and that can be used for assignment purposes. When you create a template plan, you can copy it into a group. Any associated task pages and template portfolios are copied along.

A learner can then select what tasks they want to complete. Any associated portfolios are automatically copied into their account and are ready for use.

Assignment plans

Assignment plans

Notification about submission and submission report

When you submit a portfolio to a Folioz group, a notification advises you of that. You can keep that notification as proof that you submitted a portfolio.

An institution or site administrator can run a report over the submissions to groups to get a quick overview of the submission status.

~~Report of submitted portfolios~~
Report of submitted portfolios

Support for embedding .m4a and .wav media files

You can embed .m4a video and .wav audio files via the “Embedded media” block making it possible to use video and audio recorded on your mobile device if the native formats are not .mp4 and mp3.

Revoke portfolio submission done via LTI

When you submitted a portfolio to an LMS that allows assignment submission via LTI and you want to or need to make changes to your portfolio, you can [revoke the submission](#) if the teacher hasn't yet graded the portfolio.

~~Revoke the submission of a portfolio~~
Revoke the submission of a portfolio

Group category filter in administration area

A group category filter is available in the [administration area of the groups](#) to make it easier to find groups on large sites.

Group category filter Group category type known

Group category filter

Sept 2020 Updates

Users are now people

The language on the site has changed away from 'users' in English because of the negative connotations of the term. Instead you will see:

- People
- Portfolio authors
- Group members
- Owners
- Account holders

There is still the occasional 'user' around, in particular when the term is used in the administration area and better shows what is used in third-party piece of software.

We will update all the screenshots with time, and focussed on creating screenshots of new functionalities for the time being.

Note: The term 'username' has been retained for the time being.

Language toggle

If the site has more than one language installed, you can switch between languages easily by using the [language toggle](#) in the main navigation bar.

It allows you to change the language at any point in time. Note though that the page is reloaded. Thus, if you wrote some text, you'll be asked if you want to leave the page or not to prevent that your text will be lost.

Priority to institution members

When you want to share your portfolio with other people, you can search for them on the *Edit access* page. Now you see members from your own institution or institutions first as it is most likely that you wish to share your portfolio with them.

[Share your portfolio with others](#)

Share your portfolio with others

Default group settings

Site administrators can change the [default group settings](#) to determine settings that are more suitable to their environment from the get go. Group administrators can still adjust them as usual.

Personal group labels

You can [label groups](#) in which you are a member. That allows you to filter for them on the *Groups* overview page, in the sidebar, and on your profile page, allowing you to focus on current or most frequently used groups. This functionality is particularly good for those that are in many groups and where some of these groups may not be active (any more).

Combined export

You [export](#) your portfolio content now in all available export formats. Per default, HTML and Leap2A are enabled and PDF may be available. This allows you to export everything in one go and be more flexible later on when you may need the HTML export yet also the Leap2A one. You no longer need to run two exports to get both formats.

Bulk export formats

You can [export accounts in bulk](#) not only in Leap2A but also any other available export format. Per default, HTML is available. Some sites may also activate the experimental feature of the PDF export.

Cover images for pages and collections

You can add a cover image to every page and collection. They are displayed on your *Pages and collections* overview page to make it easier to find your portfolios.

Overview page for 'Pages and collections' with cover images
Overview page for 'Pages and collections' with cover images

Sign-off and verification details

You can see [when a page was signed off](#) by the portfolio author and verified by a manager, if verification is necessary.

See details about the sign-off and verification
See details about the sign-off and verification

Restrict file types to upload

You can [restrict which file types account holders are allowed to upload](#) via the config.php file. That gives you more control over the file types you consider safe to upload.

See which file types you can upload if there is a restriction in place
See which file types you can upload if there is a restriction in place

Delete entire sections of a SmartEvidence framework

When you set up a standard and associated standard elements with it, you can now [delete all of them at once](#). Also, if you have a standard element that is a parent to others, you can delete all of them in one go, making it faster to change your framework and remove unwanted elements.

Move account to an SSO institution

You can move your account without administrator intervention on your own from one institution into another as long as the intaking institution uses SAML SSO. That allows you to side step seeking approval for the move and handle everything on your own.

Confirm your account move
Confirm your account move

More prominent SSO login button

Typically, when single sign-on via an external IdP is used on a site, the regular login form becomes secondary and is only used by administrators. In the past, the SSO login button was very subtle.

Now [it is displayed more prominently](#) and easier to see for people thus preventing that account holders try to use the regular login form that wouldn't allow them to sign in.

More prominent SSO login button
More prominent SSO login button

Single sign-on automations

There is a [range of improvements to single sign-on](#) to be found in Mahara 20.04. These changes make it easier for large organisations or groups of organisations to manage institutions and accounts on Mahara.

- Diagnose problems more easily by setting the [‘saml_log_attributes’ config.php variable](#).
- Assign site administrator and staff and institution administrator and staff permissions automatically.
- Set up and configure additional organisations from within a parent IdP automatically.
- Assign a role to an account that is added to every group in the institution (or even on the site).
- Move your account from one SSO institution to another by yourself.

May 2022 Updates

Institution support administrator role

People providing support for an institution, e.g. helpdesk or hotline support, can now receive the 'Institution support administrator' role, which includes all permissions from the 'Institution staff' role and the possibility to masquerade as a regular institution member and as institution staff.

Install languages in the site administration

Site administrators can install any translation of Mahara directly in the site administration area. Languages can also be updated there. The translations make the interface available in languages other than English. No matter the interface language though, account holders can type text in any language.

Set up portfolio completion in group collections

If a group is created in an institution that allows the use of the portfolio completion functionality, you can set up group portfolio templates that add this page. Learners can then copy the template and have the page ready to go on their personal portfolios.

Prevent changes to 'Sign-off' block on copied templates

To prevent accidental changes to the 'Sign-off' block on portfolios that are copied from a template, the block settings are not available to portfolio authors once they made a copy of the template.

Download SmartEvidence framework

If you created your SmartEvidence framework on your Mahara site instead of uploading it as a JSON file, you can now download it from the SmartEvidence framework management page and upload it to another Mahara site. This makes sharing of frameworks easier and doesn't require that they are uploaded first, but they can be created directly in Mahara.

Limit the number of groups in an institution

Site administrators can limit the number of groups that can be created in an institution in the institution settings. This allows for greater control over groups on multi-tenanted sites.

Upload files via web services

If you want to upload files directly into accounts via a third-party application, you can do so using the new file upload web services connection. It allows you to send a file from a third-party application with the consent of the account holder to Mahara.

Résumé changes

Education and employment histories are now separate menu items to be able to deal better with dragging and dropping files.

You can attach files on an education or employment history item or an achievement either directly from your Mahara files area or by uploading a file from your device.

'Contact us' notifications to institution administrator

Notifications sent by logged-in institution members go to the respective institution administrators instead of the site administrator. That way, site administrators do not have to forward requests meant for institution administrators as frequently. Notifications sent by someone not logged in still go to the site administrator.

SmartEvidence for group templates

If an institution allows to use SmartEvidence, a framework can be added to a group portfolio used as template for the creation of personal portfolios.

Include or exclude private comments from export

Decide whether you want to include or exclude private comments from your portfolio export to retain the original setting on private comments and not make them viewable by others.

Collapsible page comments

When you open a page, the comments area at the bottom of a page, when the portfolio author allowed comments, is collapsed per default to save space.

Skin stays with copied page

When you copy a page or a collection that has one or more skins applied to its pages, the skins come along with the pages if they are public or site skins that you are allowed to use.

LTI Advantage

LTI Advantage is implemented as experimental feature. At the moment, it has been tested with the Brightspace learning management system. The recording showcases the three main functionalities that are achieved:

- Authentication
- Setup of groups based on courses and enrolment information
- Portfolio submission

Current submissions across the site

View current submissions to the site from groups or external hosts that use LTI Advantage. The overview page allows site and institution administrators to quickly release portfolios that were submitted accidentally.

Accessibility improvements

We are consistently improving the accessibility of Mahara. In this release, we increased the base font size, made the viewing area of a page wider, and also corrected the heading levels so they now follow stricter rules.

In the visual editor, you now only have three headings available that comply with the heading level structure more closely.

Maroon theme

Folioz comes with a number of built-in themes. We added a new theme, 'Maroon', as alternative to these. It has an edgier feel with its slanted lines. Like the other themes, it can be used as basis for your own theme by using the 'Subthemestarter' kit.

Portfolio completion

The portfolio completion progress page can be used in conjunction with page sign-off and verification. It shows how many of these have already been attained, and which ones are still outstanding. The page displays a progress bar for a percentage overview of all sign-offs and verification as well as a list of all pages within the collection along with their sign-off and verification status.

Quick edit for 'Text' blocks

When you have a 'Text' block, you can now edit it directly from the 'Display' mode of a portfolio page. When the 'Details' mode is turned on, you see 'Quick edit' at the top of any 'Text' block and can open the configuration modal to start editing.

Instructions on 'Text' block

You can add instructions to any 'Text' block. They are displayed in both 'Edit' and 'Display' mode allowing assessors to see them as well. When a template page is copied, the instructions cannot be changed.

Lock instructions

You can mark a page as 'Template' in the page settings. At the moment that means that you can lock instructions, both page and artefact instructions, e.g. on 'Text' and 'Peer assessment' blocks.

Direct copies of the template won't allow changes to instructions.

Display course completions

You can display course completions from a learning management system (LMS) if you configured for both to exchange data. Depending on the configuration, you can see the course title, number of hours, organisation, and course type.

Assignment submission plugin for Moodle

A new Mahara assignment submission plugin is available for Moodle. It is based on web services and LTI rather than MNet and allows for the archiving of portfolios along with the previously available functionality.

URL redirect for external authentication methods

When you log in via an external authentication method on a multi-tenanted Mahara instance, you can now be redirected properly to the login screen for your authentication method as that can be configured, e.g. for LTI, if it doesn't happen automatically.