# The selective portfolio: Merging authentic and digital assessments in the age of generative Artificial Intelligence

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**Abstract:** *This article explores the selective portfolio as a pedagogical tool that bridges the gap between authentic and computer-based assessments. Authentic assessment, which emphasizes the development of skills through real-world tasks and both formative and summative feedback, requires flexible tools that capture students' learning processes and outcomes. Digital assessment provides immediate feedback and analysis of learning, supporting transparent, dynamic, and student-centered practices. The selective portfolio combines the strengths of both, capturing the learning journey and encouraging critical thinking and self-assessment. With the advent of Artificial Intelligence, the integration of AI-based analytics into the portfolio enhances its role by providing real-time feedback and personalized insights, further supporting skill development. This paper provides a conceptual and methodological analysis of the bridge between authentic and digital assessments, focusing on the impact of the selective portfolio on skill development. The analysis reveals that the selective portfolio in the form of AI-powered selective portfolio facilitates continuous, personalized assessment, promotes deep engagement, and strengthens critical thinking throughout the learning process. In conclusion, the selective portfolio emerges as a key pedagogical tool that integrates authentic and digital assessments, enhancing digital literacy and learning in the age of artificial intelligence. The paper also reports exploratory empirical findings from a survey conducted among teachers, examining perceptions and practices related to AI-supported selective portfolios.*

**Keywords:** Authentic assessment, Computer-based assessment, Assessment for learning, AI-powered selective portfolio, Professional competence.

## 1. Introduction

The profound transformations generated by the digitalization of education have led to a significant reconfiguration of teaching, learning and assessment practices, requiring new evaluative approaches that focus on competences, relevance and authenticity (Redecker, 2017; Voogt et al., 2018). In this context, traditional assessment, predominantly formative and summative tests on paper and oriented towards the reproducible verification of knowledge, proves to be an insufficient tool to capture the complexity of learning processes (Black and

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Wiliam, 2009). Authentic assessment appears as an evaluative paradigm that uses meaningful, contextualised and transferable tasks for socio-professional integration, which require workplace competences, social integration, adaptation and resilience to the professional environment (Wiggins, 1998; Gulikers, Bastiaens & Kirschner, 2004).

As Villarroel et al. (2018) noted, authentic assessment is linked to Assessment for Learning (AFL) movement, which allows teachers to collect information to adjust their teaching and helps students regulate their own learning. Four concepts are essential: authenticity (which includes realism, contextualization, and problematization in teaching and evaluating curriculum content), *realism* (linking knowledge to everyday life and work), *contextualization* (referring to situations in which knowledge can be applied in an analytical and thoughtful way), and p*roblematization* (which emphasizes that what is learned can be used to solve a problem or meet a need). Authentic assessment promotes problem-solving, autonomy, motivation, metacognition, and self-regulation.

Computer-based assessment is another paradigm that enables efficient, flexible, transparent and integrative assessment practices, facilitating continuous monitoring of student progress, immediate formative feedback and personalization of learning processes (Crisp, 2012; Bennett, 2015). The adoption of electronic assessment in both schools and universities is particularly attractive to educators as it offers time savings through the automation of grades (Iannone, Lemmo, and Kinnear, 2026). However, the use of digital technologies in assessment does not automatically ensure authenticity; therefore, it is essential to use appropriate pedagogical tools to ensure the relevance, validity and reliability of assessment practice (Boud & Falchikov, 2007; Jartarghar, Hegade & Shettar, 2025).

*The aim of this article* is to analyse the link between authentic and digital assessment in a selective portfolio, highlighting its pedagogical potential for developing competences. Specifically, it aims to explore how the selective portfolio can integrate both process-oriented and outcome-based approaches to assessment, encouraging reflection, self-regulation, critical thinking and active engagement in learning. By examining the interaction between authentic and digital assessment methods, this article aims to demonstrate how the selective portfolio supports personalised learning, enhances the relevance and validity of assessments and contributes to a dynamic, student-centred educational experience.

## 2. Literature review

In assessment research, the promotion of authenticity in education aligns with Dewey's philosophy of learning, which emphasizes democratic and experiential approaches in which learners engage with real-world problems and contexts. Such engagement fosters deeper understanding of the problem and critical thinking regarding how to solve. Authentic assessment reflects this pedagogical orientation by prioritizing tasks that mirror real-life challenges and transformation. From this perspective, authenticity in assessment is grounded in the

belief that learning should extend beyond the acquisition of knowledge to encompass the development of practical skills applicable in both personal and professional competences.

Dewey's learning theory challenges traditional models of education by rejecting authoritarian structures and conventional pedagogical practices, including assessment approaches that prioritize passive knowledge reproduction. He advocated for a learner-centered educational process grounded in free expression and active participation, principles that underpin authentic assessment. From this perspective, assessment should engage learners in meaningful, real-world tasks that reflect genuine learning experiences rather than abstract or decontextualized measures of achievement (Sikandar, 2015). However, as Edling (2025) observes, scholarly dialogue constitutes the primary mode of communication between teachers and students, as well as among students themselves. Within this framework, assessment design plays a critical role, as authentic assessment must be participatory. For this is important to opt for an 'dynamic and flexible instructional strategy' (Railean, 2014) that could integrate authentic and digital assessment.

As Bialystok (2017) notes, the increasing emphasis on connecting learning to real-world contexts has contributed to the development of authentic curricula, authentic assessment, and pedagogical approaches that foreground learning through assessment. This movement has shaped ongoing debates concerning constructivist and realist perspectives in education. While authenticity in assessment is a critical component of meaningful learning, educational outcomes are also influenced by the motivational factors that drive students' engagement with and exploration of real-world contexts. From a psychological perspective, Scott and Campos (2024) distinguish among existential authenticity, which is grounded in self-identity; constructive authenticity, which derives from socially constructed values; and objective authenticity, which is based on trust in expert judgment. Within this framework, pleasure emerges from the successful attainment of a desired goal, such as acquiring a valued object or outcome.

In management, authenticity is understood at both superficial and deeper levels. Superficially, it denotes what is "real" or "genuine," but deeper conceptions involve alignment of internal values with external expressions, conformity to social norms, and connections to people, places, or times (Lehman, O'Connor, Kovács, and Newman, 2019). This understanding is critical in digital assessment. Consistent with Dewey's emphasis on experiential and reflective learning, assessments shape both students' thinking and behavior (Railean, 2020). Digital assessments should foster reflection, self-regulation, critical thinking, and active engagement. Selective digital portfolios exemplify this approach, bridging authentic and computer-based assessment, supporting process- and outcome-oriented evaluation, and promoting learner involvement. Integrating artificial intelligence further enhances these portfolios by providing personalized feedback, tracking progress in real time, and enabling targeted interventions, facilitating an adaptive, student-centered approach aligned with individual learning needs.

In management and education, authenticity is understood at both superficial and deeper levels. Superficially, it denotes what is "real" or "genuine," but deeper conceptions involve alignment of internal values with external expressions, conformity to social norms, and connections to people, places, or times (Lehman, O'Connor, Kovács & Newman, 2019). This deeper understanding is particularly important in assessment design. Consistent with Dewey's emphasis on experiential and reflective learning, assessments shape both students' thinking and behavior (Railean, 2020). Digital assessments foster metacognition, self-regulation, critical thinking, and active engagement, rather than merely measuring static outcomes.

The selective portfolios model exemplifies this approach, bridging authentic and digital assessment because support both process- and outcome-oriented evaluation. Artificial intelligence (AI) tools could enhance the capacity of these portfolios. Examples of AI-supported tools used for assessment and learning analytics include, Turnitin, Quizlet, Knewton, Socrative, DreamBox Learning, and Gradescope provide capabilities for originality checks, adaptive learning, formative assessment, personalized lesson adjustment, and automated grading with detailed feedback. These tools illustrate how AI can support integrity checks, adaptive learning, and feedback loops within portfolio-based assessment. These tools enable real-time, data-driven insights, supporting targeted interventions and a personalized, student-centered approach. By leveraging these technologies, assessments can be aligned with individual learning needs and goals, capturing both authentic engagement and measurable competencies in meaningful, real-world contexts. From this discussion, the following research question arises: *How can authentic and digital assessments be effectively integrated into selective portfolios in the age of generative artificial intelligence*?

## 3. Research methodology

This study adopts an exploratory research design aimed at capturing teachers' perceptions, practices, and challenges rather than producing generalizable results. A mixed-methods approach was employed, combining qualitative and quantitative techniques to examine how selective digital portfolios bridge authentic and digital assessment. The qualitative component included a literature review and Google N-gram analysis to identify trends related to authentic assessment, digital portfolios, and AI integration in education. The quantitative component was based on the assumption that assessment theories can be examined across contexts of space and time, with "space" conceptualized as a continuum from real-world to virtual learning environments. Within this continuum, digital technologies, including AI tools function as resources that mediate learning achievements.

Empirical data were collected through a structured online questionnaire, designed in alignment with the study's objectives and theoretical framework. The survey investigated teachers' perceptions, practices, and challenges regarding the use of AI-based selective digital portfolios. These portfolios were conceptualized as integrative tools supporting competency-based evaluation, formative feedback, student reflection, and AI-assisted content creation, organization, and assessment.

The questionnaire, administered via Google Forms, ensured accessibility, efficiency, and anonymity of the respondents' responses. It comprised five thematic sections related to professional and personal data; familiarization with and use and scope of selective portfolio; roles and educational value of selective portfolios; the impact on student skills; and challenges and implementation perspectives.

Items included closed-ended questions, Likert-scale ratings (1–5), and open-ended questions to capture both quantitative and qualitative data. This design provided a comprehensive and coherent view of how teachers perceive and implement AI-enhanced selective portfolios in practice. Given the exploratory nature and limited sample size, findings are indicative rather than representative, highlighting trends and insights to inform future research and practice.

### 3.1 Integrating authentic and digital assessment through the selective portfolio

This section examines the growing body of global research on authentic assessment, digital assessment, and the role of the selective portfolio in bridging these approaches. By integrating both authentic and digital assessment practices, the selective portfolio has emerged as a powerful pedagogical tool that supports continuous, personalized, and reflective learning. Since 2015, the rapid diversification of learning environments driven by the application of educational technologies in both physical and virtual settings has accelerated the convergence of digital portfolios, authentic assessment, digital assessment, and artificial intelligence in the field of education, creating new opportunities for adaptive, personalized, and student-centered learning environments.

The focus is on integrating authentic learning and digital assessment in ways that help students both acquire knowledge and develop the ability to learn independently. On the one hand, the concept of the selective portfolio aligns with critical pedagogy, globalization, and the affordances of new educational technologies (Railean, 2015). It embodies metasystem learning design principles, combining process-oriented evaluation with AI-assisted monitoring tools. This integration provides real-time feedback that guides students through iterative learning processes and supports the development of professional and lifelong learning competencies. On the other hand, an effective and accessible selective portfolio requires metacognition, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills, enabling students to manage theories and technologies acquired across diverse educational contexts (Railean et al., 2025). In this sense, selective portfolios function as both a pedagogical and an assessment tool, bridging authentic learning experiences with the accessibility and scalability of digital learning environments.

One such strategy is *the AI-powered selective portfolio, a digital tool for authentic and digital assessment that leverages AI functionalities to evaluate learning products and support the development of professional competencies.* In this approach, the selective portfolio does not replace the teacher's role in assessment but functions as a facilitative mechanism, enabling the processing of

educational data, identifying patterns of learner progress, and providing personalized formative feedback. Functionally, the AI-powered selective portfolio processes textual, visual and media content of students, using specific functions of AI technologies and tools, such as learning analytics, natural language processing and educational recommendation systems.

### 3.2 The AI-powered selective portfolio in teachers' perception

Theoretically, authenticity is related to conscious attention and emotional intelligence (Tohme and Joseph, 2025). Since authenticity is a natural state of human behavior toward which people are intrinsically motivated, it can lead to behaviors that are functionally aligned with this intrinsic motivation. However, authenticity does not emerge spontaneously. It requires a leader and a stimulating social learning environment characterized by congruence with others, unconditional positive regard, and empathetic understanding. In theory, congruence refers to the alignment between a person’s inner experiences and their outer expression. In practice, congruence refers to that form of social intelligence that can be defined as authentic behavior in various learning environments.

Authenticity in assessment for learning goes beyond collaborative and social skills to encompass the learner’s ability to regulate learning processes, manage competencies, and develop lifelong learning skills in a dynamic, technology-mediated environment. These competences are maintained when learners remain motivated, curious, and engaged in meaningful and contextually relevant learning tasks (Railean, Saltykova-Vaukovich & Mkhabela, 2025).

In digital environments, personalized learning is supported by: digital portfolio assessment; adaptive learning tools; continuous feedback; which allow for flexible monitoring of progress and skill development (Redecker, 2017; Bennett, 2015). The selective portfolio acts as a bridge between authentic learning, personalized skill development and computer-based assessment.

Artificial intelligence in the selective portfolio serves as a pedagogical support system for organizing artifacts, analyzing learning progress, and enabling formative feedback and personalized assessment, without replacing the teacher’s evaluative role (Bennett, 2015; Redecker, 2017).

Through learning analysis elements, AI identifies patterns of progress or stagnation based on the comparison of successive products, providing indicative indicators for evaluation, without generating final decisions (Bennett, 2015). By correlating products with targeted objectives and skills, AI supports metacognitive reflection and can suggest differentiated learning paths, adapted to the student's profile (OECD, 2018; Villarroel et al., 2018). Through these functions, artificial intelligence transforms the selective portfolio into a dynamic tool for authentic computerized assessment**,** maintaining the teacher's pedagogical control and the balance between technological innovation and didactic rigor (Redecker, 2017).

The results of the teacher survey indicate a strongly positive perception of the selective portfolio as a tool for personalizing learning. None of the respondents

selected the lowest levels (1 or 2), suggesting that teachers do not perceive the portfolio as ineffective in supporting individualized learning paths. A small proportion of respondents (16.1%) rated the contribution at a moderate level (3), indicating that although personalization is present, it may depend on specific conditions, such as didactic design, student engagement, or digital infrastructure.

Most responses were concentrated at the upper end of the scale. 45.2% of participants selected level 4, and 38.7% chose the highest level (5 – very much). Together, these results show that 83.9% of respondents consider that the selective portfolio contributes significantly or very significantly to personalized learning. The graphical representation of the results is presented in Figure 1.

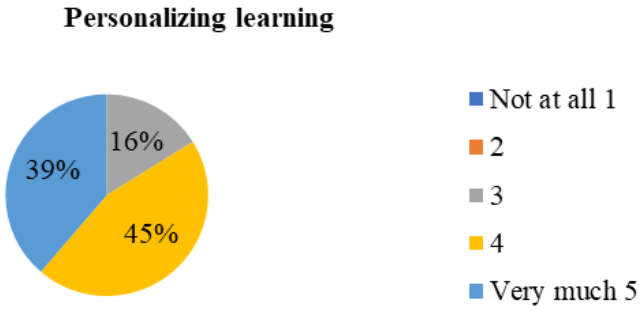


**Figure 1.** The Contribution of the Selective Portfolio to Personalizing Learning

Overall, these findings suggest that the selective portfolio allows for the adaptation of learning to the individual needs, interests, pace, and competencies of students. By allowing students to choose representative artifacts, reflect on their progress, and receive targeted feedback, the portfolio supports differentiated instruction and student-centered assessment.

In the AI-based selective portfolio, the roles of the teacher and the student are clearly delimited and complementary, and the AI has an exclusively auxiliary function, of pedagogical and analytical support. This delimitation is essential for maintaining the authenticity of the assessment and for respecting the ethical principles of digital education (Redecker, 2017).

**Table 1.** Description of the roles of the teacher, student and AI in the selective portfolio

| **Teacher's role.** | **Student's role.** | **Role of artificial intelligence.** |
|---|---|---|
| The teacher retains full pedagogical and evaluative authority, defining learning objectives and assessment criteria, validating AI-supported feedback, and making final assessment decisions. In addition, the | The student acts as an active agent in the learning process, responsible for selecting relevant portfolio artifacts, producing reflective entries, and using formative feedback to regulate learning. Through these | Artificial intelligence serves a strictly supportive pedagogical and analytical function, assisting in organizing portfolio data, identifying learning patterns, and generating formative feedback suggestions. AI |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| teacher guides students' reflective processes and ensures fairness, transparency, and coherence in assessment practices (Bennett, 2015; Villarroel et al., 2018). | activities, students develop autonomy, metacognitive skills, and self-regulated learning capacities (Barrett, 2017; OECD, 2018). | does not make evaluative decisions; interpretation and judgment remain under the teacher's responsibility (Redecker, 2017; Iannone et al., 2026). |

Clear delineation of roles ensures the balance between technological innovation and pedagogical rigor, transforming the AI-based selective portfolio into an authentic computerized assessment tool**,** focused on skills development and personalized learning.

The data obtained from the questionnaire applied to teachers indicate a clear preference for authentic, varied and competence-oriented activities, confirming the relevance of the AI-based selective portfolio as a tool for authentic digital assessment. The distribution of responses highlights the fact that the portfolio is designed as an integrative space of learning products and processes, supporting both formative assessment and the development of transversal competences.

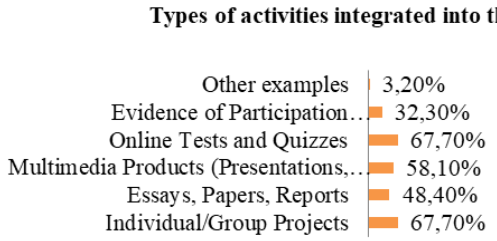


**Figure 2.** Activities integrated into the selective portfolio based on artificial intelligence

Individual and group projects are the most common type of activity included in the selective portfolio, being mentioned by 67.7% of respondents. This option confirms the central role of projects in authentic assessment, as they allow the integrated application of knowledge, skills and attitudes in contexts close to professional reality. In the context of the AI-based portfolio, artificial intelligence supports the organization and analysis of the progress of projects, without intervening in the final assessment.

A significant percentage of respondents (58.1%) indicate the inclusion of multimedia products, such as digital presentations, videos or other visual artifacts. These results confirm the trend of diversifying the forms of learning expression and valorizing digital and creative skills. Multimedia products allow for multimodal assessment of skills and support personalized learning, being recognized in the specialized literature as key elements of authentic digital portfolios (Villarroel et al., 2018). Artificial intelligence can support the classification and analysis of these artifacts, facilitating reflection and formative feedback.

The results of formative assessments, especially online tests and questionnaires, are mentioned by 67.7% of respondents, indicating the integration

of digital assessment into the portfolio structure. These activities provide objective benchmarks for monitoring progress and regulating learning, without being limited to the grading function. Studies highlight the role of digital formative assessment in supporting self-regulated learning and continuous feedback (Bennett, 2015). In the AI-based portfolio, artificial intelligence facilitates the analysis of the evolution of results over time and the identification of progress trends.

Almost half of teachers (48.4%) include essays, highlighting the importance of written reflection and academic argumentation. These activities support the development of metacognitive skills and critical thinking, which are essential for assessment as learning. Artificial intelligence can support the organization and analysis of these texts, without replacing pedagogical interpretation.

Evidence of participation and progress, such as digital certificates and badges, is included by 32.3% of respondents, indicating a moderate openness to valuing non-formal and informal learning. These elements complement the portfolio by recognizing long-term progress and support the development of skills for lifelong learning (OECD, 2018; Redecker, 2017). In the context of the AI-based portfolio, this evidence can be integrated and correlated with other artifacts for a holistic picture of the learner's development.

These findings reflect participants' reported practices and perceptions and do not imply causal relationships.

### 3.3 Practical experience in implementing the AI-based selective portfolio

The integration of empirical data with the theoretical framework confirms that the AI-based selective portfolio is built around authentic, competency-oriented activities supported by formative assessment. The included activities generate relevant educational data that allow for process-based, personalized and pedagogically grounded assessment, while AI acts as a support tool for organization, analysis and feedback, maintaining the teacher's evaluative control.

The selective portfolio based on artificial intelligence was implemented in vocational and technical education with the aim of assessing students' digital and transversal skills in an authentic and personalized way. The implementation of this tool was gradually integrated into the teaching-learning-assessment process, not replacing traditional methods, but complementing them.

Students were involved in individual and group projects, digital products (presentations, multimedia materials), written reflections and self-assessments, as well as in online formative assessments. Each student selected, justified, and organized the relevant artifacts in their portfolio in relation to the targeted competencies and established assessment criteria.

Artificial intelligence was used as a support tool for organizing artifacts, monitoring progress, and generating formative feedback suggestions, which were subsequently validated and contextualized pedagogically. The final assessment decision was made exclusively by the teacher.

The results observed included increased student engagement and responsibility, the development of self-assessment and metacognitive reflection

skills, and better visibility of individual progress over time. From a teaching practice perspective, the AI-based selective portfolio proved effective in supporting process-based assessment, personalizing learning, and basing assessment decisions on multiple evidence.

This experience confirms the potential of the AI-based selective portfolio as a tool for authentic digital assessment, which strengthens the role of the teacher and supports student-centered learning.

## 4. Conclusion

The concept of this theme is based on previous research on the assessment of digital competences in vocational education. In the paper "The selective portfolio as a method for assessing digital competences of students in vocational education" (Rotari, 2024), it is shown that the computerized selective portfolio is an effective tool for assessing digital competences. It facilitates the alignment of curricular requirements with students' performance in the real world, while supporting formative feedback and professional reflection. This article extends this approach, positioning the selective portfolio in a broader theoretical framework and analyzing it as a methodological bridge between authentic and digital assessments, with relevance in various educational contexts. Through this integrative perspective, the theme of the article contributes to the development of a conceptual model of computerized authentic assessment, in which the selective portfolio becomes a central tool for assessing competences, modernizing assessment practices and aligning them with the requirements of lifelong learning.

The analysis carried out in the article highlights the fact that the selective portfolio represents a valuable pedagogical tool, capable of ensuring the convergence between authentic assessment and computer-based assessment, responding to the requirements of contemporary education focused on competencies. Through its flexible and reflexive character, the selective portfolio facilitates the evaluation of the learning process and product, capitalizing on relevant learning experiences and supporting the development of student autonomy. The integration of digital media in the use of the selective portfolio contributes to the efficiency of the assessment process, offering the possibility of monitoring progress, increasing the transparency of the assessment criteria.

The results of the theoretical and methodological analysis confirm that the computerized selective portfolio not only optimizes evaluative practices, but also increases the validity and relevance of authentic assessment, favoring the active involvement of students and the development of metacognitive and self-regulated learning skills. In this sense, the selective portfolio appears as a viable solution for the modernization of educational assessment, providing solid premises for its alignment with the requirements of the digital society and lifelong learning. Future research perspectives may aim at investigating the applicative impact of the computerized selective portfolio in various educational contexts.

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