

TEACHING PORTFOLIOS

The Purpose of Teaching Portfolios

- A teaching portfolio provides an opportunity to reflect on practice in a public, scholarly way and to develop, review and strengthen practice.
- It provides a track record of teaching achievements and hard evidence that indicates the range and quality of teaching performance.
- A portfolio may enhance teaching and learning careers and may be used for personal and professional development and when applying for academic positions, promotion, and awards.

Suggested Content of Portfolios

- Awards or recognition of teaching and learning.
- Teaching and learning responsibilities including student numbers.
- Supervision of postgraduate students.
- Course and program development.

“My development of seven new courses since 2005 illustrates my incorporation of recent developments in my field of study into the teaching program. For example, my new Social Equity and Health Program reflects the contemporary concerns of the Men’s Health Movement.”

- Identification of pedagogy and teaching style.

“I stimulate students’ curiosity through problem-solving tasks that lead them to form their own conclusions on issues pertinent to their major field of study. I use the 5WH aid-memoire (Who? Why? What? Where? When? How?). Indicating that these questions lie at the heart of social analysis, I invite students to work in small groups, online and in class, to analyse current issues. This year I have focused on recent evidence on Hormone Replacement Therapy (for biomedical students) and on work-related stress (for safety science students). For example: Who gets stressed? Why do they get stressed? What are the symptoms of stress? I then ask students to look at their responses to see how much of their analysis refers to social phenomena. The importance of the social context of health is readily apparent.”

- Teaching and learning goals.
- Examples of teaching strategies.

“Another simulation exercise concerns Gender Stereotypes: Students are given a task to complete, for example, asking for advice in a toy shop about a gift suitable for a ten year old boy. The advice of the shop assistants is subsequently analysed via discussion board as an introduction to the topic of gender stereotypes.”

- Evidence of alignment of pedagogy with course and program objectives
- Evidence of the alignment of learning objectives, graduate qualities and assessment.
- Evidence of evaluation strategies and quality improvement based on evaluation outcomes.
- Evidence of support for student learning.

“A particular problem for students is that skills acquisition often occurs in circumstances in which they are being assessed. I seek to engage students in low-risk learning to build skills in advance of assignment submission. Specifically, I provide opportunities for low-risk writing.”

- Student learning outcomes (any student prizes?).

“To ensure active student involvement in their own learning, I provide choice either of topic or of type of assignment in all my units. One consequence of choice is that students take ownership and work to their full potential. Indeed, two of my students have won professional association undergraduate prizes for their assignments. One designed a workshop on Safe Sex. The other developed a brochure on Sexuality and Older People, out of which she has subsequently developed a career lecturing at retirement seminars.”

- Evidence of student feedback.
- Publications on learning and teaching in higher education.
- Grants for learning and teaching projects.

- Curriculum innovations.
- Teaching projects.

“My students and I participated in a project to produce a multidisciplinary book about a shire ... In essence, the shire became a social science laboratory providing realistic undergraduate research opportunities for all staff and students. Each staff member took responsibility for the production of one book chapter based on personal and students' research. My students participated in week-long camps to complete documentary research on the local town records, as well as questionnaire surveys and unstructured interviews. A significant outcome was that students' curricula vitae were enhanced by their acknowledged contributions to the publication.”

- Resource production.
- Participation in learning and teaching professional development.
- Presentations and participation in learning and teaching conferences.
- Participation in teaching and learning forums, groups, committees.
- Activities to enhance the student journey (equity, diversity, pastoral care).
- Show discipline-specific issues:

“Teaching Social Sciences in the applied area of health, requires that I reflect on the essence of my discipline in order to teach its core elements. I do this by directing students' attention to the generic skills that lie at the heart of the Social Sciences: social and political awareness; social research; critical thinking; and written and oral communication.”

Style

- Focus on student learning.
- Avoid overuse of first person.
- Allow student voice to emerge.

“Her teaching was amazing! She allowed me to see and learn new things in such a mind-blowing way and now I will always see the world differently.”

- Ensure that unique teaching practices, discipline and creativity emerge.
- Practice what you preach: Make the portfolio readable with clear headings and sub-headings. A portfolio that is poorly presented may indicate that teaching materials may also be poorly presented.

Resources

Adelaide University - Centre for Learning & Professional Development, 2009, *Teaching Portfolios*, viewed 17 March 2009, <<http://www.adelaide.edu.au/clpd/ta/portfolios/>>

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London Metropolitan University, 2008, *Deliberations*, viewed 17 March 2009, <<http://www.londonmet.ac.uk/deliberations/portfolios/urls.cfm>>

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Tigelaar, D, Dolmans, D, de Grave, W, Wolfhagen, I & van der Vleuten, C 2006, 'Participants' opinions on the usefulness of a teaching portfolio', *The Higher Education Academy* website, viewed 17 March 2009, <http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/litreviews/LITREV_Participants_Opinions_on_the_Usefulness_of_a_Teaching_Portfolio>

The University of Newcastle, 2006, *How to Compile a Teaching Portfolio*, viewed 17 March 2009, <<http://www.newcastle.edu.au/service/teaching-learning/teaching-portfolio/index.html> >

University of Texas – Center for Teaching Effectiveness, no date, *Preparing a Teaching Portfolio: A Guidebook*, Accessed 17 March 2009, <<http://www.utexas.edu/academic/cte/teachfolio.html>>

University of Texas at El Paso – Center for Effective Teaching and Learning, no date, *Teaching Portfolios*, Accessed 17 March 2009, <<http://sunconference.utep.edu/CETaL/resources/portfolios/>>

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