Developing a teaching portfolio

What is a teaching portfolio and why do I need one?

A teaching portfolio describes the scope of your teaching activity and ability, providing a record of your activities, reflections and achievements as a teacher.

The teaching portfolio has been widely adopted across a number of professional fields for evaluation and appraisal purposes. In recent years, it has gained popularity with university teachers for recording achievements and reflecting on teaching.

- A *formative* portfolio is created for the purpose of personal and professional development as a teacher
- A *summative* portfolio is created for the purpose of applying for an academic job or for promotion and tenure within a department. (UCAT, 2009)

What material can be included?

The usual practice is to collect material for your portfolio on an on-going basis.

Materials can take a variety of forms (hard copy documents, data disc, video and/or online portfolios), with the following categories of information commonly included:

Statement of teaching philosophy, responsibilities and practices	- A statement of the attitudes, expectations and assumptions underlying your own teaching - A statement outlining what you believe are your principal strengths and achievements as a teacher - A statement of your teaching practices and commitments (lectures, tutorials, labs, clinics, online materials, etc) - A list of the programs, sources, postgraduate students and associated contact hours - A list of program materials prepared for students.
Examples of good teaching/learning	- Current and past student assessment scores - Samples of student logs, workbooks, student essays, creative work, online interactions with students - Supervised theses and other evidence of effective postgraduate supervision.

Effectiveness, impact on student learning	• It is usual to comment on why you believe such products are evidence of good teaching/learning using the University Code of Good Practice: University Teaching and/or Code of Good Practice: Research Degrees Management and Supervision • Examples of formal student evaluation • Examples of peer evaluation of teachings • Examples of student feedback, emails or letters
Description of steps taken to evaluate and improve one's teaching	• Information from students which indicates increasing effectiveness in teaching and a critically reflective approach to teaching • Information from colleagues, especially with regard to program design, program materials, study guides and online resources
Evidence of scholarly and professional interest in teaching	• Involvement with curriculum development, innovative teaching methods • Membership of professional societies • Development of teaching texts • University committee work relating to teaching and learning • Presentations, published research into teaching and learning • Participation in teaching and learning related workshops and professional development courses
Other evidence	• Invitations to conduct workshops on teaching and learning • Invitations to teach for outside agencies • Media interviews on teaching • Graduate feedback • Records of awards for excellence in teaching

How do I use a teaching portfolio?

There is no one way to present a teaching portfolio. The style and format vary depending on the intended audience and purpose.

Whether for formative or summative purposes, a portfolio should be well structured and organised. It should be selective while representing the full scope of your teaching activity.

A teaching portfolio can be used when applying for appointment, probation, promotion, teaching awards, performance management or any situation where demonstration of quality teaching is required.

From among the collection of documentary evidence you need to select a subset of the aspects which support the specific purpose of the application. This subset of the portfolio is usually accompanied by a brief summary which is a statement of claims about your teaching.

There are two sets of considerations that need to be taken into account when deciding what to include in your portfolio.

First, you need to focus on the purpose of the portfolio and the criteria against which it will be judged. While the primary purpose of any portfolio is to demonstrate a scholarly approach to teaching what you choose to include will depend on the context and the achievements and capacities you wish to emphasise. In some instances criteria will be specified and if this is the case you need to ensure that they are addressed. At the University of South Australia, the Codes of Good Practice Teaching and Assessment are key documents which set out the expectations of the University in teaching. Portfolios which are concerned with teaching related activity need to be framed around these documents.

Second, your own individual background will have provided you with a range of (often unique) experiences and achievements on which you can draw to make a case for the particular purpose in hand. Each teacher's portfolio will be different and each time you present a portfolio for the same purpose it will contain new items.

Further information and useful references

- (2005) *How to Produce a Teaching Portfolio*, London Metropolitan University (includes extracts from Seldin, P (2003) *The Teaching Portfolio - A practical guide to improved performance and promotion/tenure decisions*, 2nd edition, Ankar, Bolton MA)
  www.londonmet.ac.uk/deliberations/portfolios/iced-workshop/seldin-book.cfm

- CLPD (2005), *Developing Your Teaching Portfolio*, Centre for Learning and Professional Development, The University of Adelaide
  www.adelaide.edu.au/clpd/teaching/portfolio/t_portfolio.pdf

- Costantino, PM & De Lorenzo, MN (2009), *Developing a professional teaching portfolio: a guide for success*, 3rd ed, Pearson, Upper Saddle River NJ

- Seldin, P (2004) *The Teaching Portfolio: A practical guide to improved performance and promotion/tenure decisions*, 3rd edition, Anker, Bolton MA

- UCAT (2009) *Developing a Teaching Portfolio,* University Center for Advancement of Teaching (UCAT), Ohio State University, Columbus OH,
  http://ucat.osu.edu/teaching_portfolio/