

## TEACHING PORTFOLIOS

### *What is a teaching portfolio?*

A teaching portfolio is a **structured collection of artefacts** or documents that will change over time as you extend your practice, evaluate your teaching, reflect, and act on the results of evaluations, and design different and more effective approaches to your teaching. The selection of artefacts to include in the teaching portfolio is driven by the **specific criteria** against which the portfolio will be assessed. For example, whether you are preparing a portfolio of evidence for appointment, tenure, probation, promotion, or teaching awards or fellowships, will determine the:

- types of evidence you include;
- structure of the portfolio; and
- tone of the descriptive and reflective narrative that accompanies your artefacts.

Thus, the content and presentation of a formal teaching portfolio will vary depending on its specific purposes, but in general a teaching portfolio is a collection of documents that offers clear and detailed evidence of teaching practices and goals, embedded in an explanation and **application of your personal teaching philosophy**.

### *Why do I need a teaching portfolio?*

Portfolios act as valid, tangible sources of evidence of your teaching and learning achievements against specific criteria. Increasingly teaching portfolios are used to illustrate and substantiate claims of peer review of teaching. Portfolios are used as a focus for dialogues in probation, promotion and tenure meetings, as well as visibly demonstrating teaching and learning achievements for reward and recognition applications.

### *How should my teaching portfolio be structured?*

There is no universally used format, although guidelines are often issued with requests for portfolios and should be used if you are compiling a formal portfolio for a specific purpose. In the absence of clear guidelines for a specific purpose there are a number of ways you could organise your collected evidence. These include:

- an annotated list of the items in your collection indicating the reason for the inclusion of each item; or
- a reflective journal with reference to numbered items in the collection.

## *What evidence do I include in a teaching portfolio?*

There is no recipe for the content of a teaching portfolio. Your teaching portfolio is uniquely yours, designed by you to reflect your background, teaching context and achievements as a teacher in a higher education context. Careful selection against **defined criteria** is the key to deciding what to include, bearing in mind the goal is to collect evidence about your teaching and, most importantly, support it with your **justifications** for and **reflections** on the evidence you choose to include.

## *Self-created documents*

The following is an indication of the types of artefacts you could include:

- statement of the attitudes, expectations and assumptions underlying your own teaching;
- description of your values and teaching practices;
- statement outlining what you believe to be your principal strengths and achievements as a teacher;
- teaching related publications, such as workbooks, annotated bibliographies, subject outlines, study guides, multimedia resources, and other items created as aids to your students' learning; and
- any teaching related awards, grants, fellowships received.

## *Evaluation information provided by students, colleagues and others*

- student evaluations of your teaching;
- evaluations by colleagues, especially with regard to your course materials and content;
- unsolicited statements of appreciation from past or present students indicating that your teaching was highly valued;
- invitations to facilitate workshops or courses, or to act as a consultant on teaching and learning issues in your discipline or beyond;
- evaluations of workshops you have facilitated; and
- records of awards for teaching, or other forms of recognition of teaching excellence.

### *Products of good teaching*

- samples of student workbooks and essays;
- supervised theses and other evidence of success in postgraduate supervision;
- creative work, publications and other records of your students' successes in academic or professional areas directly relating to your area of teaching expertise; and
- students' reflective journals.

### *Evidence of a scholarly and professional interest in teaching*

- peer review of subject design and resources;
- records of steps you've taken to evaluate and improve your teaching, including records of enrolment in workshops, seminars, or courses leading to qualifications in higher education;
- records of involvement in curriculum development, trials of innovative teaching methods or action research into teaching and learning within your discipline area;
- records of involvement in professional societies and associations related to teaching and learning in higher education;
- participation and leadership in University committees or sub-committees related to the improvement of teaching and learning in higher education;
- published and cited research into teaching and learning in higher education;
- delivery of refereed conference papers on teaching and learning in higher education; and
- authoring teaching texts.

[The CSU Academic: A guide to evidence in promotion](#) clearly outlines the types of evidence relevant for promotion, including the scope of the activity, and aligns these with the standards and expectations for each of the promotion levels, A-E.

## *Validation criteria*

Those reading your portfolio for probation, EDRS or promotion purposes will be seeking evidence on the following elements of your portfolio. The teaching portfolio:

- is a living document, with signs of recent additions or amendments that reflect change over time;
- contains a clear statement of your teaching philosophy and evidence/discussion/explanation of how that philosophy has been applied in practice;
- demonstrates a reflective and scholarly approach to teaching;
- provides exemplars of current and past practice, e.g. through subject outlines, marking guidelines, examples of student work etc.;
- provides evidence of how your teaching has influenced the learning of your students;
- includes self- and peer evaluation of your teaching and learning resources and evidence of how you have acted on the results of this feedback;
- contains professional developmental goals/plans, e.g. your intent to change in response to evaluation and feedback; identification of problems to be solved; your experience of, or plans for continual professional learning or scholarship of teaching and learning activities etc.; planning for your future career/personal development; and
- indicates how you have contributed towards the teaching and learning goals of your school, faculty, University, including any contributions nationally and internationally.