



## Developing a Teaching Portfolio

### Rationale

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 personal teaching philosophy. All formal teaching portfolios stem from an informal living collection of documents that will change over time as you extend your practice, evaluate your teaching, reflect and act on the results of those evaluations, and develop different and more effective approaches to your teaching.

This living evolving collection may be distilled into a particular format for a specific purpose, often according to prescribed guidelines. Thus, a formal teaching portfolio can be prepared to support applications for appointment, tenure, promotion, or to meet one of the continuing 'professional development in teaching' criteria under the University's performance-based funding model. It can form the basis for applications for external teaching awards and other forms of recognition of quality teaching.

While there is no single set of criteria and organisational structure that defines a teaching portfolio, when developed for University purposes, they are a means of aligning individual teaching development activities with externally established criteria as to the quality of teaching, as well as the emerging learner-oriented directions of the University. They should combine reflection (a highly personal activity) with evidence of performance against criteria set by the University.

### How to format a teaching portfolio

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 several 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 to collect for your 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 and achievements as a tertiary teacher. 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.

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

#### Material you create or provide yourself

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

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

- student evaluations of your teaching;
- evaluations by colleagues, especially regarding your course materials and content;
- unsolicited 'affidavits' or statements of appreciation from past or present students indicating that your teaching was highly valued;
- invitations to run workshops or courses, or to act as a consultant on teaching and learning issues in your discipline;
- evaluations of workshops that you have run; 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**

- 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 tertiary education;
- records of involvement in curriculum development, trials of innovative teaching methods or action research into teaching and learning within your subject area;
- records of involvement in professional societies and associations related to tertiary teaching;
- participation in University committees or sub-committees related to the improvement of tertiary teaching;
- published and cited research into tertiary level teaching and learning;
- delivery of refereed conference papers on tertiary teaching and learning; and
- development of teaching texts.

## **Validation criteria**

Those reading your portfolio for probation, performance management or promotion purposes will be seeking evidence on the following elements of that 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 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 evaluation of your teaching and your learning resources and evidence of how you have acted on the results of this feedback;
- contains developmental elements, e.g. your intent to change in response to evaluation and feedback; identification of problems to be solved; your experience of or plans for staff development or research in teaching activities etc.; planning for your future career/personal development;
- indicates how you have contributed towards the educational goals of your school, faculty and University.

