

PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENTS:

WHAT IS A PORTFOLIO?

A portfolio is a collection of student’s work which gives evidence to show how the student can meet the specified learning outcomes. A typical portfolio consists of work selected by the student, reasons for selecting these works and self-reflection on the learning process. Portfolio is a developmental process, thus it is not only the product the student or teacher assess upon but also the learning process in which the student develops during the given period. Portfolio is an assessment method that monitors the growth and development of student learning.

STRUCTURE OF PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT

Unlike most assessments, portfolio assessment can contain many different forms of assessments as it is a collection of student’s work. A portfolio assessment is sometimes followed by an oral assessment. Three Types of Assessment Portfolios: (Park University CETL, accessed on 3rd July 2008)

Documentation Portfolio is to highlight development and improvement of student learning during a given period of time. It often contains a range of artifacts from brainstormed lists to rough drafts to finished products.

Process Portfolio is similar to documentation portfolio, in which it contains all the evidences required to prove the learning outcomes in the given time, in addition, it integrates reflection and higher-order cognitive activities. It emphasizes metacognitive functioning and encourages students to become active participants in understanding their own learning. Process portfolio often contains documentation of reflection such as learning logs, journals and diaries.

Product Portfolio is a portfolio to demonstrate a student’s best work. This type of portfolio is typically used for interview. It is more a summative assessment and has no reflection on the learning process.

	Declarative	CHARACTERISTICS
Y	Functioning	
	Timely to Set	
Y	Timely to Answer	
Y	Timely to Correct	
Y	Timely to provide Feedback	
	Suitable for Large Class	
Y	Can substitute with Computers	
	Passive	
Y	Active	
Y	Process Oriented Method	
	Product Oriented Method	

Y	Yes
P	Possibly

Y	Knowledge	Blooms Level of Taxonomy	MEASURABLE QUANTITIES
Y	Comprehension		
Y	Application of Knowledge		
Y	Analysis		
Y	Synthesis		
Y	Evaluative Skills		
	Leadership	OTHER QUANTITIES	
Y	Life long Skills		
Y	Creative skills		
	Writing Skills		
	Team Work		
Y	Communication Skills		
	Presentation Skills		
	Memorizing Skills		
	Practical/ Physical Skills		
	Think under pressure		
Y	Project Management		
	Time management		

ADVANTAGES OF PORTFOLIO

- Portfolio is an assessment method which gives students the opportunity to be responsible for their own learning. Students often give a pride of ownership on their work.
- The self-reflection on each steps allow them to improve as they see themselves progressing over time at the different stages.
- Portfolio is an authentic assessment method, it determines meaningful work and often has personal relevance.
- It promotes diversity of assessment methods.
- It encourages motivation due to the visibility of the final portfolio.
- It promotes creativity, individuality and uniqueness in the assessment of learning.
- It assesses all levels of blooms taxonomy.
- It shifts teacher's focus from comparative ranking to improving understanding via feedback.
- Learning should not be all about the end result, portfolio is one of those assessment methods which allow students to demonstrate more than the end result – a process orientated method.
- High validity.

DISADVANTAGES OF PORTFOLIO

- Portfolio is a very time-consuming assessment method in terms of planning, responding, correcting and providing feedback.
- Clear instructions and guidelines must be given to students, as often students take portfolio as a collection of their work only with no justification on reasoning and reflective statements. A sample or defined portfolio size should also be shown.
- Plagiarism can occurred.
- It is a subjective assessment method and teachers sometimes find it difficult to assess, as it is difficult to measure reliability.
- Students may overspend their time on the presentation of the portfolio, and not on the actual content. Tutor and peer assessors may also be affected by these effects and overlook the meaningful ideas behind the topic.

HOW TO DESIGN GOOD PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENTS?

- Ensure the students know what the objectives of the portfolio assessment are.
- Provide students the time period, guidelines, requirements, assessment criteria and if there are items that are not to be included. The students should also be aware who is going to assess them – tutor, peers and/or self? And if peers or self are going to assess, would the weightings be the same as the tutor.
- Prepare a structured marking sheet for all assessors.
- Feedback is very important for a good portfolio assessment.

GRADING CRITERIA

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	COMMENTS
ORGANISATION	
	Clearly demonstrating the time frame.
ARTIFACTS AND CONTENTS	

	Variety Understanding of the content Evidence of critical thinking and problem solving ability Effectiveness of communication Evidence of creativity Knowledge of concepts and topical relationships with other content areas Overall progress in the course
REFLECTIONS	
	Clear indication on why the artifact is chosen and reflect on the ideas behind

GRADING STANDARDS

(From Recipe for Success, accessed 03 July 2008

http://myt4l.com/index.php?v=pl&page_ac=view&type=tools&tool=rubricmaker)

GRADING CRITERIA	Excellent	Proficient	Average	Poor
Organization and Writing Mechanics	No usage or writing mechanical errors. Easy to navigate. Clear and concise organization.	Few mechanical errors. Navigation is good. Well organized.	Several mechanical errors. Few problems with organization. May be difficult to read in parts.	Impossible to follow the organization of the portfolio and have many mechanical errors.
Artifact Selection	All artifacts clearly and directly related to course purpose.	Most artifacts clearly and directly related to course purpose.	Few artifacts related to course purpose.	Did not submit any artifacts.
Reflections	All reflections demonstrate student's development and insight into the complexity of issues presented. Reflections state the "what, so what and now what" in relation to artifacts. Definite connections with self and others.	Most reflections demonstrate student's development and insight into the complexity of issues presented. Reflections state the "what, so what and now what" in relation to artifacts. Connections with self and others.	Some reflections demonstrate student's development and insight into the complexity of issues presented. Reflections may state the "what, so what or now what" in relation to artifacts. Some connections with self and others.	Did not show any reflective statements

WEB REFERENCES AND RESOURCES:

Portfolio Assessment

Recipe for Success, accessed 03 July 2008

http://myt4l.com/index.php?v=pl&page_ac=view&type=tools&tool=rubricmaker)

Prince George's Country Public Schools

<http://www.pgcps.org/~elc/portfolio.html>



Pearson Prentice Hall

http://www.phschool.com/professional_development/assessment/

Tips for Students

Park University, CETL

<http://www.park.edu/cetl/quicktips/portfolio.html>

To Reference these pages

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Chan C (2008) *Assessment: Portfolio*, Assessment Resource Centre, University of Hong Kong [<http://arc.caut.hku.hk/assMethod.html>]: Available: Accessed: DATE