



## Authenticity, Validity and Sufficiency of Evidence

Students' portfolio is the way to collect evidence systematically with support from the assessor. This page will outline what is meant by a portfolio and explain the different types of evidence.

### Compiling your portfolio

As a learner you will need to demonstrate, through the presentation of evidence, that you can meet the requirements of the units within the qualification that you are undertaking. To do this you need to organise your evidence into what is known as a portfolio.

This page is intended to provide useful guidance and support to you when you come to gather your evidence.

Your assessor will also advise you on putting your portfolio together.

When we have registered you with the awarding organisation, we will provide you with an initial information pack, containing a welcome letter, on-line access instructions, an introduction to your assessor and information about how to use the online support materials and your electronic portfolio.

### What is a portfolio?

A portfolio is a folder, file or collection of information which presents:

1. Who you are e.g. a personal profile

2. Information regarding the context in which competence is sought, e.g. a description of your job and your organisation and/or department. This will help you assessor to put your evidence into context
3. Assessment Centre and awarding organisation documentation
4. Evidence of competence and development. The areas covered by the evidence will include;

Prior learning, experience and achievement

Current activities

Future needs and plans

## Organisation of your portfolio

Your portfolio should contain the following:

- An organisation structure and a short outline of the work of your organisation and/or department
- Your job description
- A career or personal profile (or CV). This is particularly helpful if it can also include achievements to date, current objectives and future plans for development
- Cross referencing forms which link evidence with requirements within each of the units
- An index listing of the evidence
- The evidence itself, each item being numbered and with a brief explanation of where and how it is being used
- A witness list of others who have contributed to your evidence
- A declaration stating that the evidence is original, authentic and has been put together by you

## **What sort of evidence is acceptable?**

Suitable evidence can be divided into two main categories – direct and indirect.

### **Direct evidence can include a variety of the following:**

- Your performance being observed by your assessor
- Projects or work based assignments
- Personal reports
- Minutes of meetings, action plans, progress reports
- Internal and external correspondence
- Prior qualifications which relate directly to the units
- Product evidence e.g. examples, samples, photographs
- Your responses to oral or written questions
- Video or authenticated audio tapes

It is expected that you will provide a diversity of evidence types to support your demonstration of competence. The list above is not exhaustive and you may find other appropriate forms of evidence depending on which course you are undertaking.

### **Indirect evidence can include:**

- Witness testimonies from people within or outside the organisation
- Achievement in related areas
- Attendance on courses/training activities relevant to the learning outcomes
- Membership of related committees or outside organisations

Such indirect evidence will be used mainly to support or confirm direct evidence.

Each VQ comes with evidence requirements which are designed to help you plan what types of evidence are required. Your assessor will also help you to decide the most suitable evidence to include in your portfolio.

You must highlight your role when you are submitting evidence that has been carried out through group work activities, for example projects and assignments.

### **Cross-referencing**

It is vital that your evidence is cross-referenced to the learning outcomes and assessment criteria within the course that you are undertaking. Your portfolio will be frequently reviewed both by us and by the awarding organisation to ensure that your evidence matches the requirements of the qualification, therefore a clear referencing system is important.

Your electronic portfolio will automatically compile an index listing your evidence, each piece of evidence will be numbered and will be referenced to the units. Your portfolio will also contain matrix pages that will be used to cross reference evidence.

Not all evidence needs to be stored within your portfolio, however where this is the case, then you need to clearly highlight where the evidence is e.g. on your personal computer (the drive and file name), in a filing cabinet (the file name).

### **Uses for the portfolio**

The portfolio is an important resource which many learners find useful to retain once they have achieved their certification, particularly as part of their ongoing continuous professional development activities, appraisal systems and even when applying for future jobs.

### **Suitability of evidence**

Your assessor will need to be satisfied that your evidence is:

- sufficient

- authentic
- relevant
- current

You need to ensure any evidence included in your portfolio meets these criteria.

### **What is sufficient?**

Your evidence must cover all aspects of the assessment criteria for each unit you are seeking to achieve. Some qualifications require specific evidence and you should check your units to see what is needed. Sufficient does not mean a mass of evidence. It simply means collecting enough evidence to demonstrate competence.

### **What is authentic?**

You must be able to explain and substantiate the evidence you put forward. It is important, therefore, to ensure you only submit evidence relating to your own performance. There is also a declaration that is completed at the end of your qualification to confirm your evidence is authentic.

### **What is relevant?**

Any evidence must relate clearly to the qualification you are seeking to achieve. Assessors are only interested in evidence directly related to the requirements set out in the units. That is, evidence which clearly links a learner's performance with specific areas of their chosen qualification. You should avoid the inclusion of reference documents, training materials and other evidence that does not demonstrate competence.

### **What is current?**

'Current' means evidence relating to skills, attitudes and knowledge you can currently demonstrate. Your assessor will be assessing your current level of competence so you must ensure that your evidence clearly relates to activities and areas of work you could still perform if required to do so.

Your assessor can help you to determine what is sufficient, authentic, relevant and current.

## **Summary of portfolio use**

Whilst your portfolio will take effort and time to complete, it is also a means of focusing and demonstrating your particular strengths and achievements to others.

**It should develop along with your achievements and take on a dynamic role as:**

- a full record of achievements to date
- proof of your competence and knowledge
- a full resource bank of your abilities
- a reference tool for staff appraisal
- a basis for career development
- a record of your continuing professional development

**In relation to VQs your portfolio provides:**

- a clear demonstration of your competence and knowledge against particular units
- a focus for your assessment
- a means to bring together evidence for more than one unit
- a focus for the identification of training/learning needs

## **Remember...**

Your portfolio will not only help you as you work towards your current qualification...but will also provide you with a useful reference tool for your future career.