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Learning Guide
Portfolios
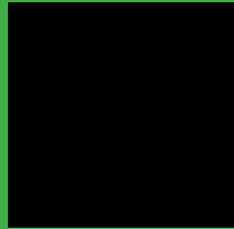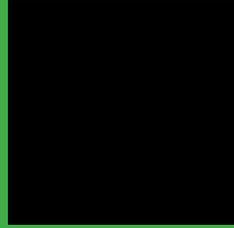
Careers & Employability
Empowering UAL students and graduates to make a living doing what they love.

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Creative Attributes Framework
This learning guide supports Communication. Search Creative Attributes to find out more.

Cm **Communication**

All information is correct at time of publication Feb 2019

What is a Portfolio

A portfolio is a sample of work that you might show a prospective employer, client or commissioner. It usually consists of images, text and information that showcases your abilities and gives examples of what you can do as a practitioner. At their best they are creative but also clear, concise and insightful.

Do:
- Research your subject area - what do other people do?
- Take note of what you like; what does and doesn't work?
- Think about your audience: who are they? What do they want to know and see?
- Map out your projects to date and choose the best.
- Develop a signature style - make it memorable.
- Aim to demonstrate a broad range of skills that are relevant to the opportunity you are applying for.
- Make an action plan to help you break down tasks to do.
- Include relevant info such as: dates, names, briefs, materials, developmental stages, feedback and scale.
- Use high quality images and re-shoot things if need be.
- Credit your references and collaborators.
- Add company logos relevant to projects.
- Aim for around 5 projects in your portfolio.
- Focus on quality, pay attention to detail.
- Make it relevant for each interview opportunity.
- Constantly re-evaluate your work.

Top Tips

- Make your portfolio exciting, distinctive and full of passion.
- Demonstrate your skills and competencies.
- Presentation is important, make it neat and tidy.
- Make sure you have good quality images and regularly take good quality photos as you develop work.
- Don't include everything. Tailor content for your audience and select work that best highlights your particular skills, attributes, creative practice and sense of direction.
- Explain the brief and objectives of project work, including your research, rationale, challenges conclusions.
- Organise your work so that it makes sense e.g. logically, chronologically, by theme or medium.
- Include unfinished work and work-in-progress as it demonstrates your thinking and development.
- Include sketches or plans for finished work to show how ideas developed.
- Don't leave out things becuase they don't fit. If it's too large/small but you'd like to show it include photos.
- Consider the order of your work; put your best work at the beginning and end of your portfolio.
- Create your portfolio in different formats including printed, PDF and website.
- Practice presenting your portfolio. Be familiar with the sequence of projects and know what to say for each one.
- Make sure your name is on the front of your portfolio and label all the work inside with titles and dates.

Note: This guide is just a starting point. You should continue to work on developing your portfolios.

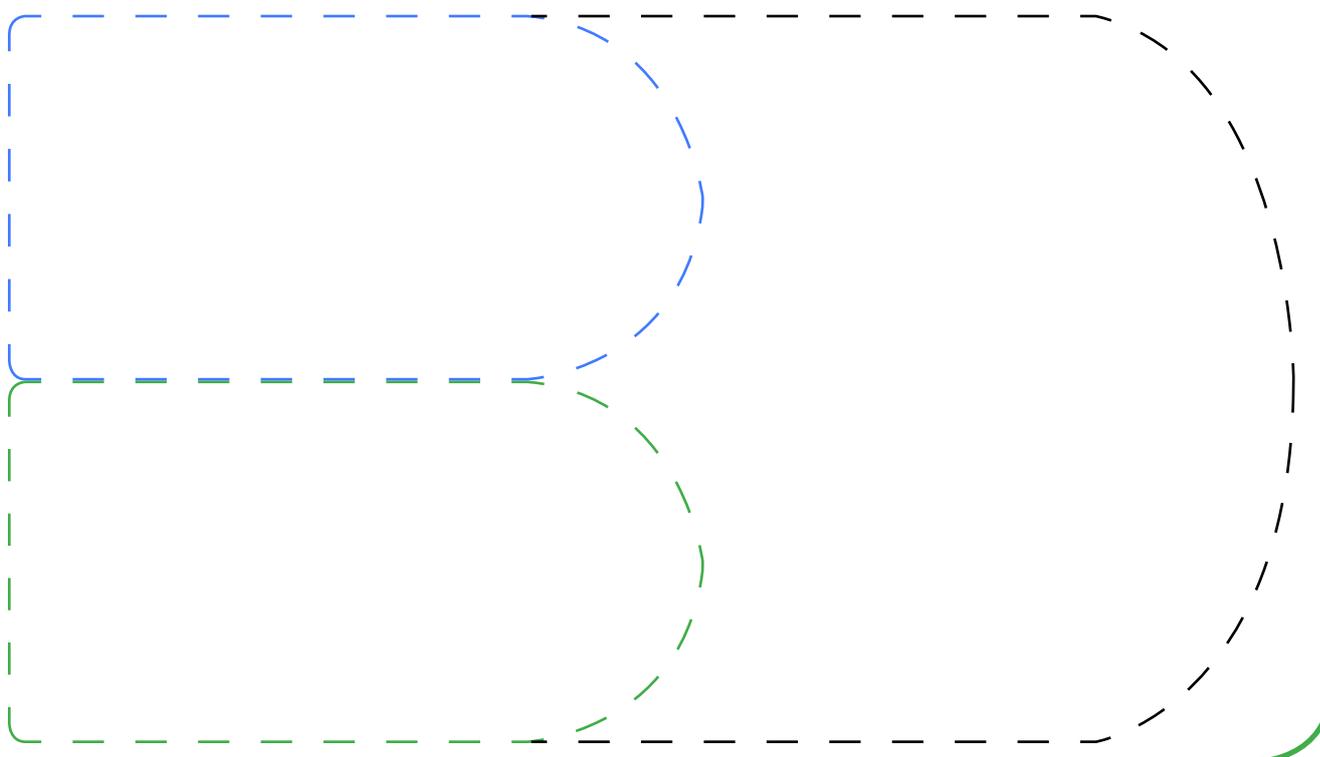# 1. Portfolio Development: from Now to the Future

Map of how you and your work is visible: Map out where you are now and want to be visible in future.

Where do people find me and my work **now**?
What do they find?

Where do I want to be visible in **future**?
What platforms would communicate my work best?

YOU

YOUR WORK

2. Cut and past - start curating your portfolio

1. Print out material from one of your most recent projects.
2. Draw a timeline of its development.
3. Highlight the key moments and significant references along the way.
4. Add some of the key information you might need to communicate this project to someone else (i.e. contextual, material, brief, process, outcome etc)
5. Try visually mapping your 'key moments' and 'key information'. Think about the amount on each page, the visuals and flow of ideas.
6. Start playing with possible layouts. Cut and paste your images/information.
7. Review the links/notes on the previous pages of this guide. Remove/add content.
8. Share this project display with some peers for feedback. What do they think?
9. Edit again. Review again.
10. Done, one project down! (Repeat until a portfolio begins to emerge!)

Checklist - of things you have done as part of your portfolio development.

- [ ] **Researched content**
- [ ] **Selected work**
- [ ] **Made a grid layout**
- [ ] **Titles / descriptions**
- [ ] **Have quality images**
- [ ] **References**
- [ ] **My contact details**
- [ ] **Portfolio case**
- [ ] **Online profile**
- [ ] **Website portfolio**
- [ ] **Social Media Portfolio**
- [ ] **Updated everything**
- [ ] _____
- [ ] _____
- [ ] _____
- [ ] _____