Portfolios as self-assessment tools:
How to do it?

Erik Driessen
Program

- How can a portfolio look like?
- Are portfolios worth the effort?
- How to do it?
An example: EPASS

- Web-based E-portfolio for residents
- Automated feedback on development of competencies
- Aggregation and benchmarking
Welcome Assistant Gynaecology
You are logged in as resident in training Gynecology at Maastricht Universitair Medisch Centrum in Maastricht.
### New workplace-based assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Year/Sem</th>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Concerning</th>
<th>Val.</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Supervision</th>
<th>View</th>
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<tr>
<td>05-7-11</td>
<td>Mini-CEX-P</td>
<td>1-1</td>
<td>MUMC+/Gyn</td>
<td>Patient contact</td>
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<td>28-6-11</td>
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<td>At level</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>View</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
ePASS

Assessment Instruments
- Mini-cex
- OSATS
- CAT
- Multisource feedback
- Letter assessment
- Activity registration
- Knowledgetests
- Simulationtests
- ...

Score on competency profile
EPASS

- Both Likert-scale items and narrative fields
- Competence development??
EPASS

1.1: 3.5
1.2: 4.2
2.1: 5.0
2.2: 4.3
7.4: 3.4

Scores

Cohort scores

Longitudinal development
Competency profile (1)

Monitor progress for each of the seven CanMEDS-competences

Overview of the seven competences
Comparison between the score of the resident and the average score of his/her peers.
Every blue dot corresponds to an assessment form included in the portfolio.
Before we discuss how to do it, we will discuss the question: are portfolios worth the effort?
Asking whether learning portfolios are good for learning or assessment is a bit like asking whether drugs are good for treating disease. "Evidence of reliability and validity is quite sparse."

Portfolios were introduced with the aim of improving the learning and assessment of doctors. Erik Driessen believes that they work well when used correctly, but Geoff Norman remains unconvinced.
Introducing portfolios is like buying new shoes: one size doesn’t fit all. Careful fitting is essential.

Portfolios work
To provide credible evidence of fitness to practise doctors have to show in realistic, often stressful, situations that they are competent in all aspects of patient management, diagnostics, communication, teamwork, administration, and professionalism. Since the 1990s various instruments have been developed to assess workplace-based learning: the mini-clinical evaluation exercise, multi-source feedback, case-based discussions, clinical work sampling, and direct observation of procedural skills.

These tools provide piecemeal information on performance. None is perfect. A portfolio amalgamates evidence from the different sources, allowing assessors to make an overall judgment of competency. The strengths of one assessment method can compensate for the limitations of another. Recent reviews confirm that portfolios effectively assess day-to-day performance. A comprehensive range of information, collated in this way, can produce a well-founded summative judgment. There is an important additional advantage. Doctors or students can simultaneously analyse their own performance. They can reflect on and improve their practice and set realistic objectives for further learning.

However, when weighing the merits of portfolios, it is essential to realise that there is no one standard portfolio. Portfolios are a clear advantage. They can be tailored to the specific objectives or outcomes being assessed. Introducing portfolios is like buying new shoes: one size does not fit all. Careful fitting is essential. Their flexibility becomes a disadvantage when they are not tailored to the objectives of the assessment.

When are portfolios worth the effort?
Despite many positive arguments, portfolios cannot be used as a universal tool for all educational purposes. Many recent studies have confirmed that portfolios do not improve academic performance. Their effectiveness therefore depends on the instructional design of the portfolio. The effectiveness of portfolios depends on the efforts of the portfolio holder and the flow of information from the portfolio.

Careful implementation is crucial. A strong resistance to the portfolio can be unleashed when learners are forced to submit a rigidly prescribed format. A portfolio planning process that allows learners to contribute to a process that reflects their personal interests and concerns, they will have a sense of ownership and be motivated to develop its content.

We need to overcome existing tensions between portfolios and summative assessment. Although the concept of combining formative and summative assessment is widely supported by educationalists, the implementation remains a challenge. The concept of portfolios used in the workplace is not well developed. A portfolio that is meaningful and worth pursuing should be an integral part of the workplace.

Competing interests: None declared.

Cite this as BMJ 2008;337:a573.
Portfolios: one size doesn’t fit all
Welkom Anne Noniemus
U bent ingelogd als A1OS Kindergeeneskunde in het Maastricht Universitair Medisch Centrum te Maastricht.
Portfolios: one size doesn’t fit all

**Overviews**
Monitoring and planning

- Log book
- resident pf
- The original
- Year 1 pf

**Assessment Material**

**Guiding Reflections**
Portfolios: one size doesn’t fit all

- Scope
- Structuring or guidance
Contexts: one size doesn’t fit all

- Management
- Users
- Infrastructure
- Portfolio

Goals

Learning activities

Learning environment
‘Portfolio: a huge useless pile of paperwork’
Why portfolios do (not) work?

BEME GUIDE

The effectiveness of portfolios for post-graduate assessment and education: BEME Guide No 12

CLAIRE TOCHEL, ALEX HAIG, ANNE HESKETH, ANN CADZOW, KAREN BEGGS, IAIN COLTHART & HEATHER PEACOCK
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Abstract

Background: Portfolios in post-graduate healthcare education are used to support reflective practice, deliver summative assessment, aid knowledge management processes and are seen as a key connection between learning at organisational and individual levels. This systematic review draws together the evidence on the effectiveness of portfolios across postgraduate healthcare and examines the implications of portfolios migrating from paper to an electronic medium across all professional settings.

Methods: A literature search was conducted for articles describing the use of a portfolio for learning in a work or professional study environment. It was designed for high sensitivity and conducted across a wide range of published and unpublished sources relevant to professional education. No limits for study design or outcomes, country of origin or language were set. Blinded, paired quality rating was carried out, and detailed appraisal of and data extraction from included articles was managed using an online tool developed specifically for the review. Findings were discussed in-depth by the team, to identify and group pertinent themes when answering the research questions.

Results: Fifty six articles from 10 countries involving seven healthcare professions met our inclusion criteria and minimum quality threshold; mostly uncontrolled observational studies. Portfolios encouraged reflection in some groups, and facilitated engagement with learning. There was limited evidence of the influence of a number of factors on portfolio use, including ongoing support from mentors or peers, implementation method, user attitude and level of initial training. Confounding variables underlying these issues, however have not been fully investigated. A number of authors explored the reliability and validity of portfolios for summative assessment but reports of accuracy across the disparate evidence base varied. Links to competency and Quality Assurance frameworks have been demonstrated. There were conflicting reports about whether the different purposes of portfolios can be
Maastricht University
Leading in Learning!

Management

Goals
Learning activities
Learning environment

User friendly
Must work!!!!!

User

Infrastructure

Clear goals
Self-direction is required (and made possible)!

Combine structure and freedom
Lean (in content and reflection)

Portfolio?

Mentor crucial for success

Time and money

Must feel portfolio is a solution for their problem
(direct use for directing learning activities)

User friendly
Must work!!!!!

Facility of Health Medicine & Life Sciences
–
Department of Educational Development and Research
If necessary, boycott the prescribed format, if you feel it makes for a portfolio that is excessive in size and lacking in purpose.
What evidence (and own experience) tells us about how to do it?

- Mentoring
- Feasability
  - Concise and relevant
  - Competentencies to be achieved, the criteria, the content and purpose of the portfolio must be clear
- Direct benefit
  - Self-direction required
  - Embedded in the overall programme
  - Individual profiles
An European e-Portfolio

- Do it to yourself before others do it to you!
- Create as much ownership over the process as possible

COMMENTARY
National, European licensing examinations or none at all?

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Conclusion

For portfolios it is the same as with drugs and shoes: good practice asks for an individual approach, experience and critical appraisal of the evidence and available portfolio systems.
More information

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