



Occupational Studies

Top Tips on Portfolio Building

Teaching and Marking

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Getting Started

1. Before you do anything else read through the specifications. Have you got enough space to deliver this and the required protective clothing, resources etc.? Make sure that you check the number of weeks you have to deliver the unit and the number of hours available to you. Then you can complete your scheme of work and check when you need to reach certain critical milestones such as team meetings and internal standardising events. This is especially important if you deliver on a Monday and there are bank holidays that will affect you.
2. You will need to prepare a booklet for the learners that includes the specifications so that they know what they will be doing on the course. It is useful to create a checklist from the specifications, which you put at the front of the portfolio. This serves as a contents page (My Record) which learners can tick off and date when they have completed the section or task. You, the teacher, could add a space to make encouraging comments such as “well done keep up the good work” or “Come on! You could do better if you didn’t waste so much time in class!”
3. The portfolio can be in the form of a booklet that you have created in advance with the sections AO1, AO2 and AO3 clearly marked out for the learners.
4. The first page of the booklet should be a title page which the learners could customise with a picture. It should include a statement authenticating the contents as the learner’s own work.
5. Remember that the portfolio should only include the learner’s work. No teacher’s notes or loose pages should be inserted other than photographic evidence or worksheets.
6. You must have a clear mark sheet at the front of the portfolio such as the one given in the specifications. This gives an overview of all the marks obtained in the 3 sections AO1, AO2 and AO3.
7. Remember **there are no predicted grades allowed**, so if a learner has not completed a section or worksheet/practical task they cannot be given a predicted grade.
8. Have a mark scheme for everything. You must put ticks and marks awarded on all marked pieces of work. Annotation is encouraged to justify why you have awarded a mark, so that the moderator can see where the marks come from. Also check your addition as the moderator will check to make sure it is correct.

Top Tips for AO1

1. AO1 worksheets should have a variety of questions for the range of learners that you have in your class. Include easier questions that everyone will be able to answer, and then make up some multiple choice questions and some questions that require an extended piece of writing for the more able.
2. Online tests can be part of the assessment, but you must have customised worksheets to allow for questions relating to a recent activity. Make sure you don’t have too many questions at one time.
3. Make sure that the worksheet marks are clearly shown and that the number of marks for each question is clearly written next to the question.

Top Tips for AO2

1. Cover the specifications exactly and check each skill off as it is completed for each learner.
2. Make a skills check or survey of the skill level starting point for your class so that you are aware of their prior knowledge and skills as well as their aspirations in the future. Do they want to pursue a career in your vocational area? These statements from the learners can be revisited during the course and they can reflect on how far they think they have come and what new skills they have learned or if they have improved on skills they already had.
3. Take photographic evidence or screen dumps to show the progression of the learner and the stages that have been taken to achieve the final product.
4. Put in any supportive evidence that assists the practical activity such as evidence of consultations before a beauty treatment, or work with children or elderly.
5. Check how many practical assessments you need to cover the specifications and make sure you plan the timing to fit in with the requirements of internal standardisation and Tac 1 completion.

Top Tips for AO3

1. Remember that evaluations are 'high-level' skills and that only a very few learners may achieve the top score in this area. But with help and support from you, the teacher, each learner should have the opportunity to get the best marks possible for them.
2. You can give opportunities for the learner to make evaluations in many ways:
 - Make sure you start asking for evaluations in each class during the activities you ask them to perform. This is especially easy to do whilst the learner is doing a practical task as you can ask them in a range of ways. What they are doing/what they can improve on/is this the best they can do?
 - There are many different ways of asking for an evaluation of their journey through the course by using 'open ended' questions which require more than just 'yes' or 'no' answers.
 - Don't allow them to just make a statement like "I couldn't improve on this" without them stating why the outcome was perfect.
 - Peer evaluations can be useful. Looking at each other's efforts and judging how each of them might improve, or preparing a questionnaire to use for judging a finished project/product can also be beneficial.
 - At the start of the course get students to try to think of how they evaluate in everyday life, such as why they choose a certain product or which CD cover they prefer and why.
 - Ask the English department in your school for help with writing evaluative statements.

Checking the Finished Portfolio

1. Have you put in all of the marks in the overall mark grid at the front of the portfolio?
2. Has the learner signed the front cover sheet that states that the portfolio is all their own work? Have you signed it as well?
3. Have you checked all of your calculations?

4. Have you included all photographic evidence in the AO2 section?
5. Is the diary completed?
6. Have you given meaningful feedback comments on the diary, worksheets and evaluations?
7. Have you had an internal standardisation meeting to check your marking and the evidence in the portfolios? If you and the rest of the team are not marking to the same standard this will be picked up at moderation and all of the portfolios in the same pathway will be adjusted up or down as required. This may change the marks of your students even if it is the portfolios from another teacher that are not marked to the required standard. It is in your best interest to look at other portfolios from the same pathway.