UP Teaching Portfolio Template

Contents

INTRODUCTION

A teaching portfolio is a living document that provides a platform to showcase and reflect on your teaching journey, educational expertise and commitment over time. It can be compiled for different purposes such as professional development and growth, confirmation of appointment, promotion, and award applications. The specific purpose for which it is intended will define the format and focus of the portfolio.

The guidelines and template proposed in this document mainly focus on confirmation of appointment and applications for promotion at the University of Pretoria (UP). The template should be adapted and guided by the relevant evaluation criteria for awards and other applications.

At UP, a teaching portfolio forms part of an "application package", including documents such as a CV, a high-level self-evaluation reflection, and more. It is essential to consult the relevant Faculty's HR Business Partner for detailed information.

CONTENT GUIDELINES

Typically, the more succinct and focused a Teaching Portfolio is, the better. A maximum of five A4 size pages (appendices excluded) is appropriate. A Teaching Portfolio typically contains two main components:

- **A narrative section reflecting your "teaching story"** When most of us teach, time constraints and other commitments force us to concentrate on "what we teach", namely the content and number of modules. In creating a Teaching Portfolio, key additional questions are "Why do I teach?", "How do I teach?" and "Why do I teach the way I do?" The narrative addresses these questions under several appropriately selected sections. These sections are indicated below, together with some guiding descriptions and ideas. Where applicable, you may combine sections. The most meaningful part of this section lies in the reflective statements.
- **Complementary information/Evidence** in the form of appendices carefully chosen to complement the claims made in the narrative section of the document.

THE NARRATIVE SECTION

This template provides a structured framework for documenting teaching beliefs, experiences, and contributions. You must ensure that each section is tailored to your experiences and accomplishments. It may be that your teaching practice has centred on a particular aspect of your teaching for the past two years (e.g., improving assessment practices). You may then choose to highlight and describe this aspect in more detail than the others – as part of your philosophy and other relevant sections of your narrative.

Teaching philosophy

As a statement of your beliefs about teaching and learning, a teaching philosophy serves as a framework and rationale behind your approach to teaching. It should be a golden thread throughout the teaching portfolio in all sections, supported with evidence. The description of your teaching philosophy should comprise the following:

- A concise statement reflecting your beliefs about teaching and learning.
- Integrating key values and principles related to those beliefs, guiding your approach to curriculum design, teaching, and assessment.
- Short-term and long-term teaching objectives, based on the above.
- An indication of alignment with educational theories or pedagogical models.
- An indication of alignment with institutional or disciplinary teaching goals.
- An indication of integrating community engagement (CE) [in applicable modules].

If you want to compile your portfolio creatively, you may also link this to an applicable teaching metaphor.

Example sentences: *My teaching philosophy is learner-centred, informed by constructivist theories. This approach aligns with UP's goal of fostering independent, lifelong learning and critical thinking. I am acutely aware of students' different levels of prior knowledge. Since prior knowledge is so important, I actively strive to establish where they are to meet them there (Chi & Ga, 1991). I use scaffolding to assist the weaker students in developing their proficiency (Had & Gibs, 2001).*

Teaching roles and responsibilities

In this section, you describe what you teach and your related responsibilities. This would typically include:

- An introduction providing context to your current teaching roles and responsibilities (undergraduate and postgraduate).
- A description of any administrative duties related to teaching.
- An explanation of any educational leadership roles within the department, faculty, institution, or broader educational landscape.
- A list of undergraduate and postgraduate modules taught in the past three to five years (could be presented in tabular form).

Example sentences: *As a lecturer, I have been instrumental in developing and delivering modules such as [Module Names and codes]. My responsibilities span both undergraduate and postgraduate teaching and learning. I joined UP in 20xx and have included an overview of my duties and track record in Table X.*

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Undergraduate modules					
- KLM 252	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
- SAA 361				✓	✓
Post-graduate supervision					
- <u>*Honours*</u>	*RES 410 (200 students)*	*RES 410 (231 students)*	*RES420 (228 students)*	*RES 410 (289 students*	*RES420 (270 students)*
- *Modules*	*(4)*	*(6)*			
- *Dissertations*			*(7)*	*(2)*	*(3)*
- <u>*Masters*</u>			*(1)*	*(1)*	*(2)*
- <u>*Doctorate*</u>					
Tutor co-ordination				✓	✓
Educational research/surveys conducted				*Tutor system in dept.*	*Online innovations*

Table 1: Overview of duties since [year]

A breakdown of the modules I teach, the number of students involved, and the throughput rate can be seen in the table below:

Year	Module	No of students	% Pass rate	Hours lecturing p/week	Other activities	Weeks involved	Student evaluation average	Total Involvement
2022	ABC 101	200	78%	3 p/w	2 discussion classes p/w	12	4.12	I was the coordinator. I set all the tests and tutorial tests. I marked three questions in the exam paper.
2023	ZYX 111	600	72%	2 p/w (x2)	n/a	6	Not yet	I presented three units. SFTS is in progress.

Table 2: A breakdown of module-specific involvement

Teaching approach, practices and effectiveness

This section focuses on your teaching approach in and outside the classroom and how you are teaching. The following aspects should be considered to highlight your holistic approach to teaching and learning:

- Your role and your students' role in teaching and learning.
- A detailed description of teaching methods (e.g., in-person/ hybrid/online).
- Ways of planning and preparing for teaching sessions.
- Integration of technology or innovative approaches.
- Incorporation of materials and resources.
- Student engagement strategies.
- Methodological approaches to CE
- Establishment of whether learning has taken place.
- Reference to evidence of effective teaching practices and activities in direct links to pictures, products, etc., or by referring to evidence in appendices to this document.

Example sentences: My teaching approach involves a hybrid learning model, integrating in-person and online methods (mainly used for pre-lecture preparations). My lesson plans encompass diverse learning materials, ensuring a dynamic and engaging learning experience. According to the student feedback received for ZYX 111 (see Appendix B), students highly value the in-class engagement activities, exercises, and quizzes. This also received mention from both peer reviewers (see Appendices C and D).

[You could insert hyperlinks to types of learning materials or a sample discussion if relevant and note-worthy.]

Promoting student learning

Promoting student learning and growth is the main aim of teaching. This section will, therefore, overlap significantly with the previous section in many instances. Combining the sections would be in order. Although the content of the two sections may coincide, this section focuses on activities and strategies that promote student learning, understanding, and success. The following aspects could be considered:

- A description of the specific module and disciplinary context.
- A description of the student population in general or for a particular module.

- Strategies for promoting active learning and engagement addressing discipline-specific challenges (e.g., developing targeted educational resources or incorporating real-world applications).
- Evidence of successful teaching strategies that lead to achieving intended goals of improved student understanding (i.e., better throughput rates or examples of successfully demonstrated student performance or learning outcomes.

Example sentences: Students find Subject A challenging due to … By understanding student needs [mention a few] and addressing these discipline-specific challenges, I employ interactive strategies, including [Name the strategies], ensuring regular and continuous student engagement to bolster a deeper understanding. In 2023, I started using mobile clickers with the muddiest point papers in my classes, and my pass rate went up by 9%.

Curriculum development

Curriculum design and development can occur at different levels (i.e., qualification, programme, module, or unit levels). It is important to provide the context of your involvement in curriculum design and development – especially when applying for promotion. This section describes your role in curriculum development in your department or faculty. The following aspects could be included:

- The development of modules (including changes to current modules) for hybrid teaching and learning.
- The integration of UP's graduate attributes and professional body requirements.
- Your participation in standardising bodies and other relevant committees.
- Evidence of expertise in designing effective outcomes-based curricula.
- Efforts to decolonise the curriculum.
- CE where applicable.

Example sentences: Over the past three years, I spearheaded the redevelopment of the [Specific Module name and Module Code] module to embrace hybrid teaching and learning methodologies. It involved a comprehensive review of the existing curriculum, introducing online components and enhancing accessibility.

In designing the [Specific Module] module, I formulated clear and measurable learning outcomes aligning with industry expectations and academic standards. A greater focus on South African practices required a complete redesign of Units 3 and 4. I chose the assessment methods carefully to evaluate the attainment of these newly included outcomes directly. Ensuring alignment with UP's graduate attributes, I consciously integrated critical thinking, effective communication, and ethical reasoning throughout the [Specific Program] curriculum. Assignments and in-class discussions were designed to develop these attributes in a scaffolded way.
[Hyperlink to examples where applicable].

Development of learning materials

Here comes an explanation of how the design and development of materials and resources form part of your teaching practice and how it links with the module's study guide. Since there is often a considerable interconnection between curriculum design and materials/resource development, combining this section with the previous one on curriculum development would be possible. The following aspects could be addressed:

- The aim with the materials/resources.
- Alignment with module outcomes.
- The educational approach that informs the development of materials.
- Description of materials developed.
- Use of multimedia, if applicable.

Example sentences: After attending a faculty discussion on accessibility and inclusivity, I became more aware of integrating universal design principles to improve my students' learning. Therefore, I started to incorporate … as seen in my clickUP modules. Student feedback from two students with visual impairments commented on this (see Appendix C).

Assessment practices

This section describes how you assess your students – their competencies as displayed in products or processes and their development and growth over time. It should include:

- Approaches to assessment (formative/summative/ diagnostic).
- Assessment plan.
- Strategies for responsible, fair, valid, and timely assessment – aligned to module and unit outcomes.
- Evidence of effectiveness of the above.
- Methods of marking and giving feedback (e.g., using rubrics, mark sheets).
- Examples of assessment methods and feedback.

Example sentences: My assessment strategy is firmly based on the principle of constructive alignment in that I do not try to trick students during assessment opportunities. I want to measure their understanding and achieved competencies (Bigs, 2003). I aim for deep learning and accomplish that through authentic formative and summative tasks (Ramen, 2018). Relevant examples of assessment instruments are indicated here [URL], and my marking and feedback strategies, including [Names of strategies], highlight my assessment practice. Student competencies demonstrated align with what the module attempts to achieve, and student throughput (see Table 2) also reflects the effectiveness of my approach. In the latest SFTS for module [Mention module], student feedback for assessment is 4.7, and several students mentioned the value of the feedback I provide.

Student support

This section describes your specific efforts that focus on supporting students in different ways outside the scheduled lecturing time. You may want to differentiate between undergraduate and postgraduate teaching when writing about the following:

- Support opportunities (e.g., through tutorials, mentoring, academic advising).
- Observance of consultation hours.
- Strategies for identifying and addressing diverse student needs.
- Initiatives to enhance student success (e.g., student motivation strategies – both in-class and online).
- Support for students onsite during the implementation of CE

Example sentences: I deliberately include as many visuals as possible during explanations to accommodate visual learners. Apart from the regular consultation hours prescribed by UP, students with urgent concerns are welcome to make appointments with me via email. I also have a regular time (Wednesday afternoons between 17:00 and 18:00) when students can meet me online in my virtual office to discuss assessment-related matters. I foster my students' academic development through mentoring, tutorials, and advising.

Mentoring and coaching

A description of any mentoring or coaching roles you fulfilled in the faculty, department, or as it applies to your teaching in a particular module is relevant here. The following aspects could be addressed:

- Examples of successful mentoring relationships/efforts with peers, tutors, and other teaching support staff.
- Impact on mentees' academic and professional development.
- Areas of mentoring focus (e.g., content development, technology use, etc.)

Example sentences: Since I am keenly interested in educational technology, my mentoring extends to peers and teaching support staff regarding classroom teaching and technology integration. As tutor coordinator for tutors in our department since the beginning of 2023, I find it valuable to scaffold the tutor's tutoring skills through regular weekly meetings with reflection and planning activities. I also regularly include other relevant lecturers in these discussions.

Reflection on feedback and other data

Continuous, spontaneous, and structured reflection is imperative to personal and professional growth as a university teacher. In this section, you will describe how you use various sets of feedback and other data to improve your teaching practice. The following aspects would ideally be included or referred to in this section:

- Own reflective notes after completion of a unit or module.
- Reflection on student feedback from various sources.
- Integrated analysis of module evaluations.
- Peer observations.
- Data analytics from clickUP or HEMIS.
- How feedback and data are used for continuous improvement.

All reviews, feedback, observations, and data mentioned above are presented in an integrated and reflective manner.

Example sentences: Regular (semesterly) reflection on peer and student feedback informs my pursuit of continuously improving my teaching and assessment practices. Evidence includes classroom observations and evaluations. Deduced and derived from the attached reports, it is worth mentioning that …

Professional development and recognition

When reflecting on your teaching practice (as in the previous section), successes, challenges, and growth come to the fore. In this section, you will describe all the measures taken (or envisaged for the future) to grow and improve yourself as a teacher. The following may be included:

- Educational induction programmes attended.
- Overview of ongoing professional development (e.g., participation in in-house training and external courses, conferences, workshops, etc.).
- Identification of teaching challenges and related improvement strategies (e.g., attendance of targeted training opportunities).
- Teaching development qualifications obtained.
- Membership/Participation in educational/professional organisations (including leadership roles).
- Recognitions for teaching excellence (e.g., Faculty Teaching Excellence award).

Example sentences: In 2000, I attended a course by Eric Jensen, Teaching with Brain in Mind, and that opened my eyes to several things, i.e., cognitive load, positional memory, neuroplasticity, and others. I realised I needed pedagogical knowledge and completed the PGCHE in 2005. Further continuous professional development includes active participation in conferences, including [Names of Conferences], and attendance of in-house training courses, including [Names of Workshops attended over time].

Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL)

In this section, give an account of your teaching scholarship developed over time while emphasising the relevant aspects from the following list:

- Description of any research into teaching and learning.
- Grants received for teaching and learning research.
- Contributions to educational literature.
- Papers delivered at educational conferences.
- Integration of research findings into teaching practices.

Example sentences: After external examiner feedback on my assessment approach, I started reading more about authentic assessment and possibilities within my teaching disciplines. The small successes I experienced with authentic assessment tasks that I gradually introduced into Module [name module] inspired me to explore even more ways to bring industry closer to all my students. In 2020, I received a UP SoTL grant to study [mention research focus] to this end. I recently presented the research at the 2021 Flexible Futures conference at the University of Pretoria. My other research related to teaching and learning contributes through the following publications [Titles] and (conference) presentations [Titles], linking my research to my module content.

Management and administration

An often underestimated part of teaching and assessment in Higher Education is the time and effort taken up by administrative tasks. The narrative on your teaching practice will only be complete with a brief description of your administrative (and, where applicable, managerial) roles and responsibilities. These could include the following:

- Description of administrative duties related to teaching and assessment.
- Administrative involvement in teaching/curriculum/ assessment committees or decision-making processes.
- Administration tasks related to any managerial role that you may fulfil.
- Involvement in developing or revising teaching-related policies or materials (e.g., updating the Departmental Teaching and Learning guide).
- Efforts to streamline any of the above processes.

Example sentences: As the coordinator for [Name of Program], I ensure the smooth operation of the program and contribute to the efficiency of my department's administration. Actively participating in the [Name of the Committee], I contribute insights into innovative teaching practices and advocate for integrating new technologies. This involvement showcases my commitment to shaping my faculty. I also played an important role in revising the faculty's Assessment Guidelines document, ensuring best practices in our assessment practices.

COMPLEMENTARY INFORMATION/EVIDENCE

A teaching portfolio is evidence-based. Claims made in the reflective narrative should be substantiated by evidence. There are two types of evidence:

- Primary evidence comprises direct proof of teaching, learning and assessment processes or products (e.g., materials developed, pictures or videos of student activities).
- Secondary evidence is where a second party (e.g., peers, students, external examiners) has reflected on aspects (processes or products) of your teaching practice.

The evidence could be included as brief examples in the narrative or concise appendices in which more extended examples and other substantiating information are included. At UP, secondary evidence (particularly student feedback via the SFTS system and peer reviews) should be included as appendices. Primary evidence of unique contributions (e.g., the outline of a new curriculum under your leadership) may also be included as an appendix. Still, most of these will form part of the narrative in hyperlinked format.

Evidence in the narrative

Safely and securely keep all relevant and appropriate evidence in electronic format on cloud storage services such as Google Drive, Dropbox, OneDrive, etc. Evidence should be judiciously selected and hyperlinked in the narrative.

Appendices

Complement the claims made in the narrative section by attaching the required appendices. Ensure these are thoughtfully integrated into the narrative and not treated as a loose-standing addition. The following principles and guidelines should be adhered to:

- Attach carefully selected and relevant examples of evidence only – not everything gathered over time.
- Include evidence supporting the claims made in the portfolio.
- At a minimum, attach the following secondary evidence:
    - 2 x peer review/class observation reports (not older than three years)
    - 2 x student feedback reports obtained from the SFTS (not older than three years).

Format guidelines

Your approach to compiling your teaching portfolio will be influenced by your personality, your discipline, your communication style and the message you would like to convey. Yet, to be considerate towards your readers and evaluators, you need to take note of the following guidelines when drafting your document:

- Submit in PDF format
- Include a cover page with the following information:
    - Heading: "Teaching Portfolio"
    - Your title and name
    - Department and Faculty name
    - Purpose (e.g., "Promotion"/"Confirmation of appointment")
    - Date (of document completion)
- Divide content into the following parts:
    - Part 1: Narrative (5 pages maximum)
    - Part 2: Evidence (30 pages maximum)
- Font: 11 pt of any Sans Serif typeface
- Line spacing: 1.5
- Multimedia clips should be of high-quality
- Ensure that all links are accessible in the final PDF version that will be submitted.

Support for Teaching Portfolio development

Teaching Portfolio courses are presented at regular intervals throughout the year. Attending one of these sessions is highly recommended, especially if you have never compiled a Teaching Portfolio. After attending one of these sessions, you are also welcome to contact the Education Consultant in your faculty for further support and guidance.