

## **Portfolios in the Nursing Profession**

**Use in assessment and professional development**



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Use in assessment and professional development

*edited by*

**Kay Norman**



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# Introduction

*Kay Norman*

Portfolio development in nursing is continuing to gain momentum both as a strategy for academic assessment and as a method for providing evidence of continuing professional development. A portfolio provides a compilation of evidence relating to your learning journey, which may consist of reflections, testimonials from colleagues/managers, observations, and clinical experiences that are personal to you.

The depth and breadth of this information is dependent on the potential use of the portfolio and will vary according to whether it forms part of an interview process, or must be completed for an academic programme within a higher educational setting. Whatever their use, portfolios are here to stay and should be embraced as a tremendous learning opportunity.

From the editor's and contributing authors' experience both in clinical practice and as educators, it is felt that issues arising from portfolio development continue to be raised by students and qualified nurses, with common queries of, 'I just don't know where to start' and 'What shall I include?' Therefore it is our intention within this text to address some of these issues to help you gain an understanding of the essence of portfolio development in relation to recognising and identifying learning; objective setting and action planning, including information and advice on how to organise your portfolio; types of evidence that may be useful to include; its relation to assessment and lifelong learning; and how this can lead to an enjoyable and empowering process.

Within the various chapters there are examples of templates that you may wish to use for your own portfolio, or to act as a basis for your own ideas and development.

Whatever your reason for developing a portfolio, which is personal to you and your learning, this book will help you to approach its development with enthusiasm and the knowledge that it will be an enjoyable and rewarding learning journey.



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*I would like to thank those publishers who have given permission to include figures and tables within this book. While every effort has been made to trace all the original copyright holders, if any have inadvertently been overlooked, the publisher will be pleased to make the necessary amendments at the first opportunity.*



# Facilitating and assessing student learning: Understanding the role of the portfolio

*Pat Hibberd*

## **Introduction**

In order to understand the role of the portfolio in facilitating and assessing learning, it is important to appreciate its place in the context of changing ideas about knowledge and learning. This chapter gives a brief outline of the educational context in which portfolios are situated, in order that you might have a better understanding of the role and purpose of the portfolio in your course. Once you have an understanding of the context for the portfolio in facilitating and assessing your learning, it will be easier for you to explore and relate to the expectations that undertaking a portfolio in learning and assessment place upon you as a learner. These expectations include the ability to demonstrate the process of learning within the portfolio. This calls for the development of appropriate study skills, the ability to recognise the importance of previous learning and the use of a reflective approach to learning. Finally the chapter introduces the concept of action planning as an important aspect of portfolio planning and development.

## ***The context for portfolios***

In the past, professional education was based on the transmission of theoretical knowledge and skills to students who then applied what they had learnt to professional practice (Dall 'Alba, 2004). Freshwater and Stickley (2004) argue that, historically, the transmission of theoretical and practical knowledge in nurse education was heavily influenced by the medical model with ideas and values taken from positivistic science. In this view of learning the student may be seen as a passive receptacle and consequently the responsibility for learning tends to lie with the teacher rather than the learner (Brockbank and McGill, 1998). In recent years however, this transmission model of education has been criticised as being inadequate for professional