

Creating a Portfolio

Purpose

All doctors are required to keep an accurate and up to date portfolio in some form as part of their career development. At each career stage, it can play a role in selection for specialty training, progression through training or revalidation to practice.

If you are in a training Foundation post in the UK you will have access to an electronic e-portfolio (TURAS) when you are appointed to the Foundation Programme.

If you are a Specialty Trainee you will then maintain a portfolio which will be determined by the Royal College. Each specialty will have different requirements and formats and this is assessed online by an annual ARCP Panel.

Foundation doctors need to present all or part of their E portfolio as part of the interview process for specialty training, for most training programmes. Usually one of the interview stations involves assessing the portfolio and this counts towards the overall interview score. At this stage, all or part must be downloaded to a paper based version and presented at interview.

Structure

The structure of a training portfolio is set out by the programme you are in and the evidence required for assessment, but it is still important to “personalise” and make it stand out, especially for recruitment. There are standard headings that can be used if doctors are not in an approved programme

and guidance regarding this is provided on the Oriel website.

The Foundation portfolio can be downloaded and organised under the existing headings. You can enhance it further by adding content such as reflections, photographs, achievements, interests outside medicine.

However you organise your portfolio, it is important to make sure that sections are separated, indexed and material well-organised. This makes a positive statement about you and will make a panel’s job easier.

Content

This will include progression evidence such as mini CEXs, DOPs, posters, conferences, research and audits need to be included. Original certificates (Medical Degree, Membership of Royal Colleges, other qualifications e.g. MRCP) will also need to be included or uploaded.

It is therefore helpful to collect this as you go along and set it out, so that you can easily see evidence gaps. Leaving portfolio maintenance to the last minute can lead to omissions and lost opportunity to address weaker areas.

The portfolio is an evidence log but is also a tool for reflection, so include case studies about your training which highlight good areas of practice. Critical incident reflections also show how you have learned from challenging situations and thought about what you would do differently the next time. This shows that you are not only working through the process of medical training but learning and taking note of your experiences.

Key points about portfolios:

The portfolio is a record of your training and is not a tick box exercise. The GMC revalidation process has embedded the portfolio of continuing practice as an important part of the lifelong learning process and a reflection tool for all doctors, from junior trainees to senior consultants.

Top Tips for Foundation Doctors:

- Aim to build time into your working week to ensure you are collecting and uploading required evidence from training.
- Work on reflection – find a reflection “buddy” and help each other to develop cases and stories. It’s often easier to think experiences through with a “critical friend”.
- Think back to significant achievements at medical school and include anything that is relevant to your career choices.
- If you are considering a specific specialty, find opportunities to generate evidence that shows you are genuinely interested in this career path e.g. talks, conferences, posters. Include this in a specialty interview portfolio (but remember to showcase different things for different specialties!).
- Check the Royal College recruitment websites for Applicant Guidelines. Find out exactly what is expected for your interview – some may not require a hard copy portfolio at all and some may

only ask for certain items. Look also at guidelines for self-assessment of evidence. Some specialties will ask you to score your portfolio against criteria and you will then discuss your score at interview.

- Don’t see your portfolio as something that’s over and done with after F2 – you will need all of it and more as you continue through your medical career.
- If you spend time in another activity or role before applying for Specialty Training, keep adding to your portfolio. This may include locum work, travel abroad, further study, volunteering etc.
- Make sure you have downloaded everything in a hard copy before your access to the Foundation e-Portfolio ends.

Additional Information

Further guidance for the Foundation e-portfolio can be found at:

<https://turasportfoliowales.nes.digital/>

For top tips for setting up and maintaining a portfolio, look under “Developing your health career”:

www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/

The Oriel Resource Bank contains guidance for preparing a portfolio for Specialty Training Interviews:

www.oriel.nhs.uk/Web/ResourceBank