

BSC Oral Health Sciences Graduate Attributes Portfolio

Student Guide

Introduction

Following research completed on the student's perceptions of the development and assessment of their graduate attributes, the following recommendations were made:

- Investigate ways in which tutors can make their methods for developing graduate attributes more visible to students.
- Explore alternative options for assessing attainment of graduate attributes.

Following team discussions, it was decided a method was required to encourage you to reflect on your development more frequently as opposed to the current single event at the end of each semester. It was also felt that students should be supported to recognise their own development rather than simply being instructed by tutors. Taking into considerations the research participant's requests to consider graduate attributes holistically rather than on a module by module basis, the Graduate Attributes Portfolio has been developed.

The aim of this portfolio is to encourage students reflect on their development at regular intervals and provide evidence of how they are working to achieve them. It will be reviewed at timetabled PAT meetings (twice in a semester) to give the opportunity for staff to ensure students are recognising the value all modules play in the development of these key skills.

The Portfolio

The portfolio will be hosted on Mahara. This written guide explains the aim of the portfolio and the responsibilities of students and staff. A video guide on how to create the portfolio on Mahara has also been produced.

The portfolio has 5 sections which relate to the 5 graduate attribute categories laid out by UHI:

- Academic Skills
- Communication
- Self-Management
- Interpersonal Skills
- Social Awareness

In each of these sections there is an area for you to comment throughout your time as a student. You should update this portfolio regularly throughout your semesters. Any time you have a learning event or take part in an activity which you feel has

helped you develop your graduate attributes, take a few minutes to write about it. We are not looking for a lot of writing in each post. It isn't appropriate to give you a word count as we appreciate everyone approaches reflection differently however, we wouldn't expect anything more than a couple of hundred words per post at the absolute maximum.

We would like you to evidence your posts. For example, rather than simply stating 'my public speaking abilities have improved' you should give a specific example of how and why they have improved. Evidence may be as simple as describing a particular event. You may also have some kind of documentation that you can use, e.g. some feedback from a tutor, a piece of work you submitted. Anything which you feel shows you have developed in the way you are describing in your post.

Your posts will be date and time stamped. This means that you will be able to keep track of how frequently you are contributing to your portfolio. This is good for your own awareness however this will also be used by your PAT to monitor your engagement.

The opportunity for reviewing your portfolio with a tutor will come at your PAT meetings. At each PAT meeting you can look over your posts and discuss your progression. It will form the basis of your discussions. At the end of the meeting your PAT will log that you have been able to refer to all the modules you are currently enrolled on in your portfolio. If they feel you need to do a little more work on it, they may ask you to go away and do that and set another review date for the near future. If you or they feel there is a particular module you are finding more challenging to relate to your graduate attributes, they will let the module leader know so they can help you with this.

Finally, this portfolio will replace the previous end of semester Graduate Attributes submissions. We hope you will find this method more productive and less tedious than the old system. As this is a form of assessment it is important you ensure you keep it up to date. If your PAT is unable to say you have completed it satisfactorily, you will not be able to progress on the course just like with any other assessment.

Students Responsibilities

- Follow the written and video instructions on how to create and edit your portfolio.
- Create a copy of the Graduate Attributes Portfolio page on Mahara within the first 2 weeks of first year.
- Share the page with your PAT as soon as it is created.
- Keep the same portfolio page throughout your 3 years as a student.
- Identify learning events or activities which have enhanced the development of your graduate attributes.
- Add to the portfolio whenever you feel you have had a significant learning event or become aware of a particular development.
- Evidence your posts by discussing, or uploading a document relating to, a specific event.

- This portfolio is designed for regular editing, not a rush to fill in the boxes immediately before a PAT meeting.
- Discuss your posts with your PAT and identify areas where you may need assistance.

The Role of the PAT

- Review the portfolio at each PAT meeting.
- Review comments added to the portfolio in the time period since the last meeting.
- Ensure students are considering all the modules on which they are currently enrolled in their development.
- Discuss the comments with the students in the PAT meeting – students can add to their portfolios during the meeting or a tutor may ask them to work on it further and set another review date in the near future
- If a student is finding it challenging to link any particular module to the graduate attributes, inform the module leader by email.
- Complete the PAT GA sign off document.

The Role of Teaching Staff

It is very important that students are able to identify their own development however, module leaders and teaching staff can play an important role in encouraging this. This is a new process for students so simple reminders at the end of teaching sessions will be helpful.

The research found that students like to discuss graduate attributes as a group. To reflect this, module leaders should include a discussion on graduate attributes relevant to their modules in the module introduction session. This should involve giving the students the opportunity to look at the 5 UHI graduate attribute themes and discuss how they anticipate the module will assist in their development. This does not require to be face to face. Any format that allows the students to hear and respond to the thoughts of their class is fine. The module leader can decide what method of delivery suits them best.

A session has been timetabled in week 13/14 for each year group to meet and discuss how all their learning over the semester has assisted in their development. These will be facilitated by the year leads. Again, the format for this delivery is up to the tutor leading the session.

Feedback

This portfolio will run as a pilot over the 2020/2021 academic year. I would appreciate any feedback from you over this time period. Please feel free to email me at any point with your comments. We will review the system 2021.

Thank you very much for your support with this new initiative.

Lizzie Hall