

# Handout Teaching Portfolio

## What is a teaching portfolio and what is its purpose?

Teaching portfolios are self-determined representations of one's own teaching competence, teaching practice and personal, action-guiding teaching and learning beliefs on the basis of in-depth (self-)reflection.

Working on a teaching portfolio offers instructors the opportunity to examine teaching-related topics and practices. Reflecting on one's own understanding of teaching and learning makes the roots of teaching practices in different contexts visible and processable.

This allows to make new considerations and to further develop and professionalize one's own teaching. In the portfolio format, personal didactic professionalization can be continuously documented and supplemented.

At many universities in the European higher education area, the teaching portfolio or excerpts from it are expected in applications, among other things. Academic teaching competence can be presented in a structured way in the teaching portfolio.

To ensure that teaching portfolios have an impact beyond the authors and can also inspire others in their professional development, instructors are brought into an exchange during the writing process through peer feedback in tandems and teaching portfolio reviews.

## How is a teaching portfolio structured?

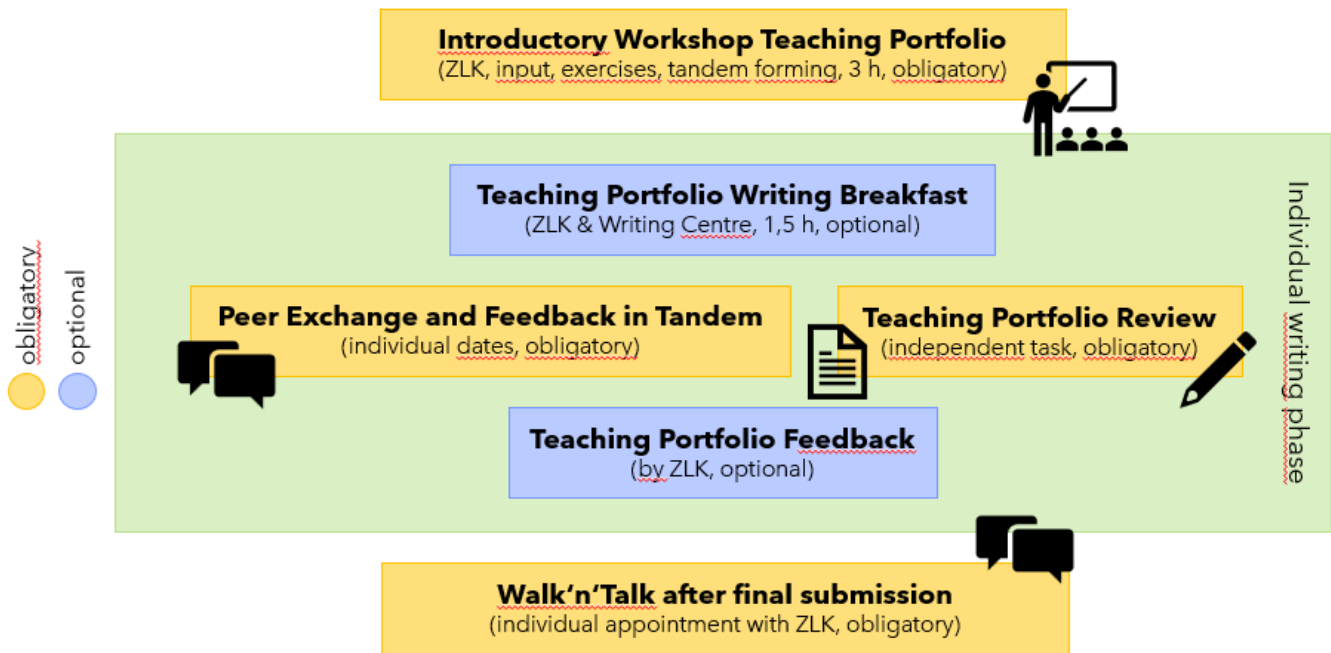
A teaching portfolio, whatever its structure, should always provide information and answers on the following questions:

- Teaching experience, contents and target groups of teaching (WHAT, for WHOM?)
- Teaching philosophy or understanding of teaching & learning (WHY?)
- Teaching approach and methods (HOW?)
- Feedback & evaluations and how to deal with them (WHAT do others think?)
- Commitment in other teaching-related areas & personal university teaching training
- Perspectives & individual teaching goals (WHERE TO?)

A teaching portfolio is a multi-page (+/- 8 pages) document that is coherent in itself. The teaching philosophy and the understanding of the role, for example, should be reflected in the teaching methods. Main aspects should be supported by appropriate evidence (appendix). References between the chapters and a common thread support reading.

## How does the teaching portfolio process at the University of Graz look like?

After an introductory workshop with tandem formation, instructors work independently on their teaching portfolio. Peer feedback and the review of a teaching portfolio written at the University of Graz are part of the writing process, as the exchange with other teachers makes a central contribution to professionalization as a teacher.



The **obligatory elements** are:

- (1) **Introductory workshop:** The three-hour workshop is offered twice per semester by the ZLK and introduces the teaching portfolio (writing) with input and exercises.
- (2) **Peer feedback exchange:** The tandems formed in the introductory workshop meet self-organized during the individual writing phase; dates are to be arranged independently within the team.
- (3) **Teaching portfolio review:** Reading a teaching portfolio written at the University of Graz and writing a review, including sending it to the author of the teaching portfolio, makes an important contribution to self-reflection, to one's own writing process and to interdisciplinary exchange between teachers.
- (4) **Walk'n'Talk conclusion:** After submitting the teaching portfolio, a final discussion takes place in the form of a short walk; the date is agreed individually with the ZLK.

The **optional elements** are:

- **Teaching portfolio writing breakfast:** Once a semester, there is an informal setting for writing (input) and exchange.
- **Teaching portfolio feedback:** Parts of the portfolio or a first version can be submitted to the ZLK for feedback at any time.

It is recommended that the teaching portfolio be written within one year of attending the introductory workshop.

### Which services are offered by the Competence Center for University Teaching?

- introductory workshop twice per semester
- consultations on individual arrangement
- feedback on text sections and the first version of the teaching portfolio
- accompanying Moodle course with materials, suggestions and assistance