



GUIDELINES FOR PREPARING:

Reflective Portfolio on Scientific Communication
What do you take from the module?

What is a Reflective Portfolio?

A reflective portfolio is a compilation of evidence of experience gained, achievement and professional development. Typically, examples of work and evidence of achievement are placed in a portfolio.

What is the purpose of the Reflective Portfolio on the module: Scientific Communication?

Your overall purpose in the Reflective Portfolio is to present a reflective document on what you take from the module: Scientific Communication (AGRI 3100) – Knowledge gained? Skills achieved? Confidence gained in embarking on dissertation work? Confidence gained in writing dissertation? Awareness of: Faculty Dissertation Guidelines? It will consist of a compilation of evidence of:

- Activities undertaken by you.
- Your achievements.
- Your professional development – outcome of your reflective analysis of knowledge gained, skills achieved and demonstrated.

In addition, an important purpose of the portfolio will be to demonstrate your ability to write concisely and accurately using proper referencing style.

Sections to be included in the Student Placement Portfolio

Typically the portfolio should contain three sections, defined below:

1. Evidence of knowledge gained and skills acquired.
2. Critical reflection of the contribution of the module to your professional development:
What do you take from the module?
3. Annexes

Follow the guidelines below for preparing each section of the portfolio.

1. Evidence of knowledge gained and skills acquired

Refer to the elements given below to demonstrate development of core competencies in scientific communication. The core competencies are defined below:

SECTION 1

Evidence of knowledge gained and skills acquired? Core competencies?

Core competencies:
(i)Hypothesis testing (hypothesis-driven research): showing an appreciation for <i>good</i> scientific research
(ii)Using library databases
(iii)Writing a Reference List (according to specified format)
(iv)In-text referencing (according to specified format)
(v)Identifying the features and purpose of well-designed tables to present research results.
(vi)Identifying the features and purpose of well-designed figures to present research results.
(vii)Identifying the key features of a good abstract.
(viii) Recognising the salient features of an effective poster.
(ix)Delivering a powerful oral presentation.

1.1 Hypothesis Testing: After having read one (1) research paper *related* to your dissertation work,

- State the *problem* that was investigated by the authors of the research paper.
- Formulate the *hypotheses* that have driven the experimental work?
- Document the *justification* that is put forward by the authors for the proposed research.
- State the *objectives* of the experiment that is reported in the research paper.
- Describe *briefly* the method(s) that have been used to achieve the objectives.

Insert a copy of the research paper in the list of Annexes.

1.2 Using Library Databases: Use library resources (and Internet; from peer reviewed literature) to locate six (6) papers *related* to your dissertation work. The papers selected should demonstrate that you have covered the body of knowledge available in the peer-review literature and recognised sources:

- (i) Scientific Journal.
- (ii) Conference Proceedings.
- (iii) Book.
- (iv) Section from a book.
- (v) Site on the Internet (peer-reviewed literature)
- (vi) Published / Unpublished Reports.

Use a columnar format to:

- List the papers.
- Identify and state the type of publication.
- State the process used to access to each publication.
- Briefly state relevance of each publication to your dissertation work.

Insert a copy of all six publications in the list of Annexes.

1.3 Writing a Reference List (using the BSc Dissertation Guidelines):

Use the six references cited in section 1.2 to:

- Write a Reference List, using the standards of the: BSc (Hons) Dissertation Guidelines (2007) (<http://www.uom.ac.mu/Faculties/FOA/index.htm>).
 - List references in *alphabetical* order.
 - Pay attention to *types of punctuation* and *use of parentheses*.
 - *Indent* the *second and following lines* to emphasise each author's name and for ease of reference.

1.4 In-Text Referencing (using the BSc Dissertation Guidelines): Use the BSc (Hons) Dissertation Guidelines (2007) (section: 9.3.1.1) to write in a scientific format your interpretation of three (3) relevant findings presented in any of the papers listed at 1.3.

- Write 3 sentences.
- Validate all statements by fact.
- Use appropriate in-text referencing.

1.5: Identifying the features and purpose of well-designed tables to present research results: Use one (1) research paper listed at 1.3. Refer to one (1) Table that has been used by the authors of the paper to present research results.

- Insert Table in your portfolio.
- Refer to the Table, to list and point the assessor to the key features of a well-designed table.
 - Number of Table.
 - Title of Table – clarity / conciseness
 - Column headings.
 - Row headings.
 - Footnotes.
 - Unit of measurement used.
 - Writing of data (rounded for significance) / powers etc.
 - Number of items shown in Table.
 - Its organisation in the text.
- State *briefly* why table is included.

1.6: Identifying the key features and purpose of figures to present research results: Use one (1) research paper listed at 1.3. Refer to one (1) Figure that has been used by the authors of the paper to present research results.

- Insert Figure in your Portfolio.
- Refer to the Figure, to list and point the assessor to the key features of a well-prepared illustration.
 - Number of Figure.
 - Title of Figure – clarity / conciseness.
 - Relevance of Legends.
 - Footnotes.
 - Easy to read data presented (crowded? Or not?).
 - Its organisation in the text.

- State *briefly* why Figure is included: relevance of presentation of numerical data (line graph? Bar chart? Flow Chart? Photographs? Pie Charts etc)

1.7: Identifying the key features of a good abstract: Use one (1) research paper listed at 1.3. Refer to the Abstract Section that has been written by the authors.

- Reproduce the Abstract in your Portfolio.
- Refer to the Abstract to recognise and point the assessor to the key features of a good Abstract.
 - Number of paragraphs.
 - Completeness? Does it report all the relevant facts?
 - Accuracy of writing: are findings given as hard facts or general statements?
 - Can you identify the sections and highlight same: ¹Objectives / Scope of work; ²Methodology used; ³Main findings; ⁴Main conclusions / Significance of Results.
- Refer to the Abstract to answer the following questions: Does the Abstract
 - Refer to Tables / Figures that appear in the paper?
 - Refer to literature cited?
 - What do you conclude?

1.8 Recognising the salient features of an effective poster: Reflect on the salient features of an effective scientific poster. You may refer to your notes in the Lecture/Discussion (UNIT 10). Using a bulleted list, summarise your reflective arguments on these features.

1.9 Delivering a powerful oral presentation: Assemble six (6) PowerPoint slides to demonstrate the salient features of an effective scientific poster.

The first slide of your presentation shall be the title slide with the following details:

- Title of your presentation.
- Name.
- Student ID.
- Programme of Study/Level.

The other five slides may include illustrations, plates, figures, diagrams. Text and other information that will demonstrate the salient features of an effective poster. You may also include scanned copies/plates of relevant sections of an effective poster.

Your submission will consist of the 6 PowerPoint slides printed out in handout form with 2 slides per page. You will be assessed on both the content of your slides and the quality of your oral presentation. The oral presentation will last **6 minutes for each group of 2 students**.

Oral presentation will be assessed as per the Annex 2. A copy of same, filled in by the assessor with his/her comments, will be returned to the group of students, as feedback on their performance during the oral presentation.

SECTION 2

What have I learnt from the module?

2. What have I learnt from the module? Learner Outcomes?

Use a Bulleted List to document in some detail what you have learnt from this module.

You may consider the following questions that will lead you through your reflection: Did you learn to look more critically at some aspects of scientific communication, eg referencing; accuracy in writing; validation of statements by facts? Are you more familiar with aspects of research methodology? Do you recognise that a good dissertation (outcome of good research) depends primarily on the *quality of the approach* and *methods* used? Are you more familiar with what should be included in each section of the dissertation? Are you aware of the expected standards for Hons dissertation, as the dissertation is a vital part of your degree? In consequence, what is the importance that you will give to an effective time management?

Focus on the knowledge gained; skills acquired; attitudes – greater confidence?

SECTION 3

Annexes

3. Annexes

Include a list of Annexes.

Format

We recommend that you use the following format in the preparation of the portfolio:

- **Cover and Binding:** the portfolio shall be submitted in spiral-bound form with a protective cover and a stiff card back-cover.
- **Paper and Typographical details:**
 - The portfolio must be typed, justified and printed on one side of paper only. Use 1½ spacing; font size 12; font type: generally Times New Roman / Arial.
 - Use good quality paper, size A4 (300 x 210 mm).
 - Margins at the binding shall not be less than 40mm, and other margins not less than 20mm.
 - The numbers and captions to tables shall be placed at the top.
 - The numbers and captions to figures shall be placed at the bottom.
- **Pagination:** Pages shall be numbered consecutively throughout the dissertation, starting from the title page. Page numbers shall be located **centrally** at the bottom of the page approximately 10 mm above the edge.

Structure of Portfolio

We recommend the following layout with the sections organised in sequence in the portfolio:

- **Title Page** - The “Title Page” shall include the following: University of Mauritius; Faculty of Agriculture; Full name of student; Programme of Study; Word count; Date of submission.
- **Table of Contents.**
- **Three (3) sections of portfolio**

Length of Portfolio (Word Count)

The number of words in the portfolio shall be between **1500 – 2500 words**. The number of words applies only to the main body of the portfolio, excludes Title Page, Table of Contents, Annexes. The word count should be stated on the Title Page.

Remember: It is a valuable skill to be able to write concisely!

Assessment Procedures and Criteria

Assessment of the **Scientific Communication** module will be based on the submission of a reflective portfolio. For satisfactory completion of the module, the following requirements must be met:

- A minimum of **40%** should be attained in Portfolio. Faculty Evaluation of Knowledge gained / skills achieved, as documented and evidenced in the Portfolio (Refer to Annex 1)
- Minimum of **80% attendance** to lectures / seminars / practical classes. (Attendance is taken).

2 Annexures



UNIVERSITY OF MAURITIUS

FACULTY OF AGRICULTURE

EVALUATION OF PORTFOLIO – Scientific Communication

The assessment of each student is based on set criteria including evaluation of student’s knowledge and skills gained, and demonstrated, in scientific communication.

Name of Student: _____

Programme of Study: _____

**RATING OF STUDENT’S KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS IN
SCIENTIFIC COMMUNICATION**

(Please tick clearly the appropriate box for each criterion)

	1	2	3	4	5
Hypothesis testing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Using library databases	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Writing a Reference List	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
In-text referencing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Identifying key features and purpose of tables to present research results	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Identifying key features and purpose of figures to present research results	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Identifying the key features of a good abstract	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recognising salient features of an effective poster	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Delivering a powerful oral presentation*	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Structure, presentation, word count	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

(1 = Poor; 2 = Fair ; 3 = Good ; 4 = Very Good; 5 = Excellent)

**Use Annex 2 to finalise rating*

Comments (if any):.....

FINAL MARK AWARDED: / 100

UNIVERSITY OF MAURITIUS FACULTY OF AGRICULTURE

BSc (Hons) / MSc POSTER PRESENTATION

Name of Student:

Programme of Study:

Name of Assessor: Date:

Scale	Performance	Range of marks
1	Very poor	0 - <20%
2	Poor	20 - <40%
3	Fair / Satisfactory	40 - <60%
4	Fairly good / Good	60 - <80%
5	Excellent	80 - 100%

<input type="checkbox"/> ORAL PRESENTATION		Level				
		[Very Poor]			[Excellent]	
1.	Audible regulated presentation (rate, pronunciation, tone)	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Enthusiasm about subject (arouse and retain interest of audience)	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Response to questions	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Respect of time limit	1	2	3	4	5
<input type="checkbox"/> POSTER						
5.	Presentation of objective(s)	1	2	3	4	5
6.	Presentation of research method(s)	1	2	3	4	5
7.	Presentation of results and analyses	1	2	3	4	5
8.	Presentation of discussion / conclusions	1	2	3	4	5
9.	Relevance of visual aids (appropriateness of figures, tables <i>etc</i>)	1	2	3	4	5
10.	Clarity of visual aids (clear, self-explanatory)	1	2	3	4	5

MARKS	
	100

SIGNATURE OF ASSESSOR:

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